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ABSTRACT

This report reviews several approaches tc organizational analysis and discusses prcblems in implementing an accountability system. Chapter 1 surveys socio-technical and technical-behavioral systems. Chapter 2 discusses the importance of psychoanalysis and organization analysis. Chapter 3 presents problems in implementing an accountability system and is followed by several case studies. The final chapter discusses steps to implementation that require special attention to the social and psychological organization of the institution. (Author/LD)

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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS:

A PSYCHO-SOCIAL APPROACH

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A. ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE KEPLER PUBLIC SCHOOLS: A TECHNICAL-BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The Need for This Study: Three current problems in educational management are addressed by this research:

1. The underutilization of accountability techniques.
2. The imbalanced use of accountability techniques.
3. The unsatisfactory analysis of problems in the implementation of accountability systems.

Of these three problems, the last is the central one for this study. We have been concerned with the many ways in which difficulties that arise in the course of accountability implementation either go unidentified or are erroneously or superficially analyzed. Most previous analyses have attributed accountability system failures to the characteristics of the system itself. They have attempted to improve the operation of such technical systems by purely design changes. We argue that problems of implementation must be given full attention. *Accountability systems fail more often because of flaws in their implementation and utilization than because of flaws in design.*

In most cases implementation has been imbalanced at best.[1] It has stressed some aspects of accountability systems at the expense of others, and ultimately at the expense of school systems. Many efforts to implement PPBS have inhibited meaningful program analysis by over-emphasizing program structure and accounting. Their effect has often been to swamp school personnel and administrators in so much paper work that no time is left for analyzing and improving program performance.[2] Similarly,

performance contracting programs have required such elaborate proposals that they have discouraged applications from small, innovative contractors. They have also usually incorporated such restrictive and cumbersome control systems that the flexibility which lies at the heart of the idea of performance contracting becomes impossible.[3] Implementations of management by objectives have tended to evade the issue of performance measurement by concentrating on elaborate goal-setting sessions without much follow-through.[4] These and related problems are reviewed in greater detail in Chapter IV.

Imbalanced implementation--of all these kinds--occurs because there are no generally useful implementation strategies, and ad hoc implementation usually reflects the biases of the implementors rather than the needs of the school system. These biases tend to be overly "rational" and excessively detailed. Implementation is imbalanced, therefore, because it fails to account for the operational needs, style and behavior of the school system. This is true at two levels. First, many of the educational accountability implementations of the late sixties and early seventies were carried out by or with the aid of experts who attempted to transfer knowledge directly from non-educational settings. As Dorfman has commented:

> If an analyst from outside the organization conducts a study, it is essential that he work closely with the people who are involved in the situation. Outsiders need to acquire experience with the system under study or mistakes will be made.... Frequently the economists, operations analysts, and engineers, who are eager to solve educational problems at this time, have too little knowledge of the educational institutions and processes to be completely effective. (Dorfman, 1971, p. 359)

This general problem has been alleviated somewhat with the development of educational specialists, although their training and conceptual foundations still depend largely on experiences in non-educational settings.

The second-level problem is more pervasive. Every single educational organization in the country is, in fact, different, and each differs from the others in ways which are of crucial importance to the success or failure of its accountability implementation efforts. What is needed, thus, is not greater skill in developing a single implementation program which will be equally useful for the entire universe of educational institutions. Rather, we need a framework for analyzing each situation and designing the implementation program best suited to it. This does not mean that each district must begin its own efforts in a void. On the contrary, one of the essential features of the framework we propose is that it allows administrators and analysts to more effectively assess the relevance of accountability experiences in other districts.

The significant research about implementation consists mainly of reports and analyses of past experience. Hopefully, if a general framework or model for viewing accountability implementations gains acceptance, it will allow for a matching of system characteristics to implementation problems. As research is currently reported, this is difficult. In the first place, such research is not always presented in a form which is geared to the access by line administrators as well as professional consultants. More fundamentally, it tends to explain implementation problems by recourse to a different level of analysis. Thus a report may discuss accountability in systems-analytic terms and then suddenly switch to the language of group dynamics or offer a reference to individual

preferences in order to explain the failure of the system in the organization. *It is, moreover, essential that the entire socio-technical system of the organization be viewed as a whole.* The organization of technical tasks and emotional group identifications take place for the same set of people in the same school system. A technical change (such as accountability implementation) is at the same time a sentinent[5] change. Much is gained if both can be analyzed under a single approach.

A third problem with research as it is currently reported is that it tends to bring in organizational variables to explain accountability problems only on an ad hoc basis. Thus, rather than systematically noting all the relevant features of a system, so that a reader can assess the similiarity of that organization to his own, it mentions only such features that are seen as impeding accountability. We contend that these features lose their meaning when abstracted from their organizational context. One can hardly imagine a doctor who would try to describe what lungs do without referring to the circulatory system. Organizational researchers, however, have often been content to describe motivation without referring to communication or interpersonal structure.

This does not mean that past research is not valuable, more that it is not as readily digestible as it could be. School administrators in rural areas are readily aware that techniques developed in urban education may not work as well for them. But they are not equipped with a means for determining more subtle differences between their organizations and others in a more systematic way. Such means are what this study attempts to provide, at least in preliminary form.

We do also address some of the more general problems of accountability implementations. Work by Wildavsky, Schick, Enthoven and others[6]

underlines several problems of PPBS implementation in the federal government. Prime among these problems is the tendency of the budgeting and accounting aspects of a system like PPB to overwhelm its analytic potential. This results in meaningless paper shuffling. Since programs and policies are not really analyzed, program and policy changes are not analytically related to the accountability system. A related problem concerns the question of whom the accountability system is supposed to serve--the central office or the unit manager (i.e., the school principal)? Uncertainty about this issue is often held to explain agency reluctance to implement PPBS. Confusion on this issue appears in all three school districts we studied as well. We would, however, not be so sanguine as to suggest that better understanding alone would fully remedy the situation. Real conflicts of interests as well as misunderstandings influence system responses to accountability (see Chapter IV). Certainly, however, clarity of roles and interests is to be desired, if only so that better compromises and accommodations can be worked out. Such understanding, again, can only be adequately achieved within a view of the organization as a whole.

Analysis of PPBS implementation in school systems is copious. Hartley's early work, Mushkin's 5-5-5 project, the Association of School Business Officials manual, summary evaluation from individual states and school systems, and several RAND publications[7] corroborate a major finding of the federal experience. This is that structural elements of accountability systems easily become so complex and cumbersome that they undermine achievement of accountability goals. The relationship between what researchers consider over-simplifications and administrators consider impossible complications is an important one--and a difficult one to get

around. As Dorfman describes Abt's (1966) cost-effectiveness models:

> In order to make the problem manageable, the over-all model was broken down into a cost-model, an instructional process model, a school flow model, a dropout model, a course of study selection model, and a community effect model. Most school systems refused to use these models because of their overcomplexity. But in reality, they represented gross oversimplification. (Dorfman, 1971, p. 352)

While the problem of appropriate structure is an important one, it often has been treated as the major problem at the expense of more crucial issues such as implementation strategy, analysis and feedback inputs. In our model, elaboration of structural elements is reduced to a functional minimum, and criteria are provided for judging the appropriateness of various structural options. In Dorfman's words again:

> The essential core of systems analysis is a philosophy, a point of view, an approach rather than a bag of tricks or set of techniques. (Dorfman, 1971, p. 351)

Research in both federal and local educational implementations of PPBS also agrees about three other conclusions:

1. Goals are formed unrealistically and unanalytically.
2. Systems personnel are reluctant to furnish needed data and unable to use generated data.
3. More rational resource allocation through accountability aggravates organizational conflict

These are clearly behavioral problems, yet the relevant research fails to consider the environmental, organizational and psychological factors that might explain them. Such factors distinguish one setting from another and therefore determine what kind of PPBS system (or other accountability system) is appropriate, and what implementation strategy should be used. These are precisely the factors which we take into central account. The present model will enable researchers and practitioners to vary design and

implementation at need, and thus to avoid the rigidity which seems to lead PPBS implementations often to clash violently with the organizations on which they are imposed.

Research on other types of accountability system implementations in education is relatively sparse. The performance contracting experience has been evaluated by both the Office of Economic Opportunity and the RAND corporation. RAND and various school boards have also published implementation manuals.[8] The major utility of these works is in pointing out the inadequacy of traditional performance measures when effectiveness analysis became a crucial concern (see below). The most relevant conclusion for implementation strategy that can be drawn from this research is similar to a main conclusion of the PPBS literature: control and concern for control mechanism often become so restrictive that innovation is impossible and the role of analysis is obscured. In addition, the experience suggests that the traditional models of motivation assumed in implementing accountability systems are overly simplistic. They tend to treat system personnel as "economic men" and fail to incorporate the full complex of rewards and value systems that should be designed and considered in implementing an accountability system.[9] By contrast, we focus on the diversity of personality structure and person-organization relationships. It is important, therefore, to stress that studies of individual motivation are inadequate to deal with motivation of individuals and groups in organization (see Chapter IV). In viewing the organization as a context for socio-psychological interaction, one becomes aware of new organizational factors influencing individual identity and motivation.[10]

There has been no major evaluation of recent experiments with management-by-objectives (MBO). But there are suggestions from industrial

experience that the two-way goal-setting which is supposed to underlie MBO can easily be subverted by hierarchical patterns of decision-making and control. The converse problem can be equally serious: organizations oriented toward participative decision-making may waste inordinate amounts of time attempting to set acceptable but behaviorally measurable objectives. They thus underestimate the importance of analysis and feedback, and fail to give them adequate attention. These different situations both reflect *the common tendency of organizations to use accountability systems as a means of acting out their organizational problems rather than correcting them.* In many cases the desire for accountability can only beg the question of a fuller organizational diagnosis.

We have spoken thus far about management systems such as PPBS. Some mention must also be made of effectiveness analysis, a related and unfortunately also problematic area in modern education, before we go on to a more general consideration of motivation. First of all, educational goals normally tend to be too ambiguous, diverse, contradictory and/or normative to permit easy consensus about what kinds of performance should be measured.[11] As Barro has summarized:

> Ideally, a school system and its constituent parts, as appropriate, should be held responsible for performance in three areas: (1) selecting "correct" objectives and assigning them appropriate priorities, (2) achieving all the stated (or implicit) objectives, and (3) avoiding unintentional adverse effects on pupils. Realistically, much less can even be attempted. The first of the three areas falls entirely outside the realm of objective measurement and analysis, assessment of objective being an intrinsically subjective, value-laden, and often highly political process. (Barro, 1971, pp. 366-367)

As a result of this impossibly complex problem in goal setting, many districts become preoccupied with the choice and statement of appropriate goals to the exclusion of real analysis. To this must be added the

problems of measurement which beset all attempts at effectiveness analysis for even the most clearly stated goals. The performance measures used in practice--standardized achievement and diagnostic tests--lack utility because they seem only tenuously related to the actual performance goals of teachers and schools.[12] In other words, too many tradeoffs are made to assume measurability. Validity and applicability are sacrificed to reliability. A third difficulty is that developing relevant, goal-oriented performance measures seems to require more money and analytical sophistication than school systems can readily provide.[13]

While this study has not been primarily concerned with technical issues of effectiveness analysis, it has addressed itself to some important aspects of their context and function. This is a fourth and generally overlooked problem. The administration of effectiveness measures has important impact of the system as a whole. In the first place, it can be threatening in greater or lesser degree. Moreover, it can correspond in units of measurements to the actual units of socio-psychological organization or it can crosscut them. People do not like being held accountable for that over which their control is incomplete. This threat can be tolerated where responsibility is shared with members of a fairly solidary primary working group. Anxiety and hostility increase exponentially, however, when shared accountability links organizational actors not socio-psychologically bound together. As with management systems more generally, this is a problem which

> relates to the absence of a construct as to how the new technology is to be used in an integrated and systemic manner; or consider it as the absence of a meaningful gestalt or whole into which such a technology would logically fit. (Young, 1971, p. 312)

This is, of course, the issue to which general systems theory applications have been addressing themselves for several years (see discussion in Chapter II). We might note, however, that workers in that tradition have tended to emphasize matters of logical fit and interrelationship over and above those of practical organization. The best logic, unfortunately, may not fit with the socio-psychological reality of an organization. Usually administrators have responded to this problem by simply attempting to "change the minds" of organization members through group dynamics or other "training." This is useful, to an extent, but it should not be thought that minds can be extensively changed within the realm a) of rational argument alone, and b) within the limits of fiscal feasibility. Organizations need to accept practices which their members can accept, rather than choose the most logical or optimal practice without attention to sentient attachment and motivation.

Despite the prevalence of problems in implementation and analysis, motivational problems are the most important and least studied cause of accountability failures. Accordingly, we have focused on them especially. Motivation is central because school-system personnel--especially teachers --have discretion so broad that it enables them to determine ultimate resource use as much as higher level policies do. One cannot reasonably respond to this by attempting to limit the discretion of teachers. This would be self-defeating as it would correspondingly limit the flexibility and increase the costs of the system prohibitively. If the knowledge of effectiveness that is produced by accountability systems is to be utilized, it first must affect the behavior of line personnel. If resource allocation is to have its ultimate effects in the classroom, and if that is

where resource use is finally decided, then that is the level at which efforts to use resources more effectively must concentrate.

Yet most accountability systems have been implemented in substantial ignorance of motivational issues. More surprising still, they have assumed that this division of technical from socio-psychological organization was both useful and tenable. We suggest that it is neither. We have attempted to discover what goals teachers actually--rather than just formally--pursue, so that the performance measures, effectiveness analyses, and feedback related to these goals can be made directly relevant to classroom activities. We have also attempted to assess the psychological impacts of the new accountability systems--something on which none of the districts studied (nor to our knowledge others) had focused their attention before. This enables much better prediction about the new policies to which the accountability implementation may lead. Attention to such matters may help administrators to see that the failure of school system personnel to participate creatively in accountability systems and to implement the results of analysis is a direct result of the implementation process. Such failures can be anticipated and are not intractable.

In summary, the need to which this study is addressed is for an approach to the implementation of accountability systems in educational settings which

1. Is practically accessible to the school administrator but can also provide the basis for professional intervention.

2. Aids in the construction of implementation procedures geared to the particular situation and needs of each individual school system.

3. Provides for the retrospective analysis of problems which occur in the course of implementation.

4. Guides the choice and design of the accountability system itself.

5. Will help members of the organization to understand why they behave as they do in the context of the organization both in general and with specific regard to the accountability system.

6. Deals with the educational institution as a whole, revealing interrelationships and mutual influences among the many variables involved.

The Problem Defined: The very notion of what accountability means is unclear. Its application to educational (as opposed to industrial) concerns is the subject of still more debate. There are two primary dimensions of disagreement. The first differentiates those who feel that accountability means the assignment of rewards and punishment as a result of performance, and those who think that it does not. The latter group emphasizes the aim of improved performance rather than retribution or reward. The second dimension shows a difference of emphasis between the accountability of persons and that of practices and organizations. Our own usage is intended to be as general as possible, in order that we may assess the relative success and/or failure of the various procedures which share the name 'accountability.' Let us look briefly at aspects of the differences.

Browder identifies three (not completely distinct) senses of the term accountability:

> First is an uncritical use of the term as a word synonymous with "responsibility." A second usage is more critical, suggesting an obligation to explain or account for the disposition of tasks entrusted to an individual. The third sense appears in the form of a partially defined concept peculiar to education--"educational accountability." This third use of accountability conveys the notion that the schools and the educators who operate them be "held to account" (i.e., held both responsible and answerable) for what they produce as "educational outcomes" (i.e., for what students learn). (Browder, 1971, p. 1)

This is similar to the "basic idea" which Barro identifies,

> that school systems and schools, or, more precisely, the professional educators who operate them, should be held responsible for educational outcomes--for what children learn. (Barro, 1971, p. 361)

Note, by the way, Barro's quick retraction of the notion of an accountability of systems. Lopez suggests that

> accountability is intended...to insure that the behavior of every member of an organization is largely functional. Accountability is to be distinguished from responsibility by the fact that the latter is an essential component of authority which cannot be delegated. (Lopez, 1971, p. 384)

Lopez also emphasizes the importance of specificity of goals and criteria for accountability and takes the side that

> it must be quite clear from the outset that the purpose of the accountability program is improvement of present role performance. If the measurements and standards developed are used for other purposes--such as discipline, promotion, and salary increases--the program will fail, positively and absolutely. (Ibid., p. 393)

Compare this account with that of Lessinger, who argues that

> Accountability is a product of a process. At its most basic level, it means that an agent, public or private, entering into a contractual agreement to perform a service will be held answerable for performing according to agreed-upon terms, within an established time period, and with a stipulated use of resources and performance standards. This definition of accountability requires that the parties to the contract keep clear and complete records and that this information be available for outside review. It also suggests penalties and rewards; accountability without redress or incentive is mere rhetoric. (Lessinger, 1971, p. 398)

It is no wonder that most members of educational systems do not know what to expect when they are told that an accountability system is about to be implemented!

A central problem with "accountability systems" is that they have become a sort of mythological panacea: a means (however chimerical) of solving all problems at once. This nothing can effectively be. There is in fact an interesting paradoxical relationship between inflated expectations and paucity of returns in the field of accountability--indeed in management generally. The more the relationship between input and expectations is "magical," the more likely are administrators to substitute a pro forma technical implementation for the hard work and slow progress of reality. Even on a realistic plane, accountability's flurry of popularity in the late sixties-early seventies may have much to do with its abilities to symbolize and unify several prominent issues of the day. Its subsequent fall in popularity has less to do with a change in issues than with its failure to solve any--while it brought all more to the forefront of attention. The idea of "accountability" as a unifying principle or label rather than a specific and novel practice is shared by Barro:

> The unusual rapidity with which the accountability concept has been assimilated in educational circles and by critics of the schools seems less attributable to its novelty than to its serviceability as a unifying theme. Among its antecedents one can identify at least four major strands of current thought and action in education: (1) the new, federally stimulated emphasis on evaluation of school systems and their programs; (2) the growing tendency to look at educational enterprises in terms of cost effectiveness; (3) increasing concentration on education for the disadvantaged as a priority area of responsibility for the schools; and (4) the movement to make school systems more directly responsive to their clientele and communities, either by establishing decentralized community control or by introducing consumer choice through a voucher scheme. Under the accountability banner, these diverse programs for educational reform coalesce and reinforce one another, each gaining strength and all, in turn, strengthening already powerful pressures for educational change. (Barro, 1971, pp. 361-362)

Unfortunately in practice these many themes tend to be merged and thus administrators and change agents have a fairly fuzzy idea of what they are after. This problem is further complicated by the failure to distinguish between accountability of systems and actors. The question indeed is seldom posed as to whether it makes more sense at some point to change the system rather than attempt to change the actor to fit it or get rid of him. Rather, individualist assumptions pervade this area of educational management (no doubt largely because of their influence in the branch of economics on which it draws). It is continually assumed in accountability that the task is one of getting individuals to do their jobs--not one of creating a system which can do it its job (with the cooperation of its members). It is often the system and not individual will power which creates or influences problems of motivation underlying accountability system failures.

This assumption of the responsibility of the individual is evident in Browder's description of accountability in terms of stewards and reviewers:

> 1. Accountability is a process occurring in a relationship between those entrusted with the accomplishment of specific tasks (stewards), and those having power of review (reviewers).
> 2. The heart of the process is for the party "standing to account," the steward, to explain as rationally as possible the results of efforts to achieve the specific task objectives of his stewardship.
> 3. Of major concern to the parties reviewing the stewardship of the tasks performed will be the matching of performance and attainment levels against their expectations as expressed in the task specifications and making a determination of their level of confidence in the steward and his efforts.
> 4. Of major concern to the steward standing-to-account will be his ability to accomplish the specified tasks as well as his ability to explain attainment levels in a manner that maintains or builds the reviewer's confidence in his stewardship. (Browder, 1971, p. 2)

This approach assumes that it is best for the system to attempt to hold parts (stewards) to account. Such an assumption is by no means empirically justifiable--it is value-based. Most people making it, however, tend to assume that it has a basis in fact--indeed, that it is in some sense inescapable. Even where it is desirable to hold individual parts of the system to account for specific aspects of their performance, much more attention must be devoted to the sources of their performance. Managers (including especially educational administrators) tend often to assume that when something goes wrong, it is merely a matter of insufficient effort. They thus attribute motivational problems to failures of individual willpower, unless some other factor is pressed home first. On a larger level, they treat the cumulative problems of which individual motivational issues are small units by simply adding resources:

> Educational institutions are just beginning to develop methods of systems analysis. Too often, however, educational administrators and planners are still adding one more teacher, one more school, one more schoolbus, one more text. Each problem is solved separately without enough regard for system relationships. (Dorfman, 1971, pp. 356-357)

It is as though administrators treated effectiveness as a continuous quantitative variable which could be increased by an addition of any of a number of components: effort, facilities, manpower, etc. But an increase of facilities and manpower does not necessarily equal an increase in effort. One of the conditions of education is that its work is done by actual line personnel, individually and in groups, in a way structured by the organization. Within this context, it is the effort and skill of these people--not for example the number of them nor of their supervisors or resources which counts. Ironically, they are treated as though they were but one more ingredient to be added to this overall effectiveness

soup. They are implemented in the same way new textbooks are--without regard for the system as a whole.

This makes a certain amount of sense for textbooks. It makes none at all for accountability systems. Accountability systems are designed to restructure the organization as a whole and the ways members think of it. As such they are by definition discontinuous with earlier patterns. They cannot be added as though they were like units. The effectiveness of an accountability system is measured entirely in the effectiveness of the other variables in the organization. It is not measured in terms unique unto itself. Or rather, it should not be--frequently administrators seem to do so. An effective accountability system implementation will disturb people from this established ways of operation. But it should do this for carefully chosen reasons--not accidentally. And use should be made of the disturbance to produce new and more integrated ways of doing things. As Smelser has suggested, one must "destructure in order to restructure" (cf. 1962, p. 70). At the same time, however, the choice to implement accountability systems should not be made lightly. Since it can cause great disruption in a system's functioning and since it requires considerable effort and resources for implementation, the choice to use it should be carefully weighed against perceived benefits. In other words, accountability systems should not be implemented at all, if they are not going to be implemented and developed carefully.

Conditions and Limitations of the Study: The nature of the subject under study, the interface between organization and technical system, required a research methodology which could illustrate the

effects of this interface on the organization's ability to adapt to change. As such a diagnostic methodology, Organizational Diagnosis, was chosen to assess the changes in the organization's dynamic processes during the implementation of a technical system: accountability. Organizational Diagnosis and the psychodynamic nature of the research led to the development of a multi-method approach to data collection. This approach emphasizes the collection of data by using several research instruments such as (1) survey instruments, (2) interviews, (3) the personal diary of field researchers, and (4) a comprehensive factual data intrument. The multi-method approach also offers an analytic technique for validating findings. Organizational phenomenon of interest are substantiated by their recurrence in data collected under different instruments. The case study method, while particularly useful in studying organizational processes, is not well adapted (on its own) to the study of individual organizational structures like management systems. As such, Organizational Diagnosis, was modified to correct this limitation. Similarly, the multi-method approach violates traditional standards of validity and reliability. However, qualitative research, particularly psychodynamic work in organizations, depends on qualitative variables.

The original methodology called for the inclusion of four research sites chosen by the criteria of urban/rural environment, ethnic composition, size, and experience with accountability. One district was to be a large community school district in New York. However, the multi-method approach (four instruments), the size of a community district (60,000 students), and the cost in staff hours--both field visits and analysis of data--made this approach economically

unfeasible. In addition, access to a New York City community district was cp,plicated by both labor and political factors which might have ultimately endangered the conduct of the study. Three sites were then selected, one representing a similar urban environment, distinguishable from New York in size and by the nature of the accountability system. Still, the exclusion of a large community district limits the value of the research for application to large urban environments where implementation covers several communities and school systems.

The conduct of the research in the field met opposition from teachers' associations at the three sites. In all of the school districts the presence of the research staff was identified with attempts by the administration to introduce or substantiate accountability in the district. In one district the teachers' association was largely neglected in the planning of the field research. In response, teachers in the high school refused to participate until they were given the opportunity to review the research and its use in the district. In the other districts teacher reaction was less resistant, as the staff took greater care in including the teachers in all presentations of the research theory, methodology, and application.

Notes

1. See Levine (1971a).
2. See Levine, ibid.
3. See Levine and Uttal (1973).
4. See Levinson (1970).
5. "Sentient" refers to the bonds of emotional identification among members of the organization.
6. See Wildavsky (1969); Schick (1969); Enthoven and Smith (1971).
7. See Hartley (1968); Mushkin [ed.] (1969); Haggart et al. (1969); Curtis [ed.] (1971).
8. See Dickinson [ed.] (1971); Education Turnkey Systems(1971); Carpenter et al. (1971).
9. See Levine and Uttal (1973).
10. See also Levinson (1974); Levinson (1962).
11. See Elboim-Dror (1970).
12. See Dyer (1968).
13. See Levine (1971b).

Chapter II

SOCIO-TECHNICAL SYSTEMS: CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Developing a comprehensive framework for the study of the organization as a whole has been a central part of the present research. In particular, we have sought to develop an approach suited to the choice and implementation of technical planning and management systems. Such a comprehensive framework is necessary to provide a context for the more specific implementation analyses which are sought. These latter could not be fully accurate unless they took account of the complex set of interrelationships and overarching identity which constitute the organization as a whole. This is particularly the case with management and planning systems which intend to regulate the interrelations of the parts of the organization. They might be termed a self-exemplifying case of the need for comprehensive data in implementing planned change. In the first part of this chapter we deal with the context and background of our research in socio-technical organizational research. In the second we discuss accountability systems or socio-technical systems.

Organizational Diagnosis, originally proposed by Levinson (1972), is an attempt to apply psychoanalytic, and more generally clinical, methods to the study and treatment of organizations. We have considerably elaborated Levinson's original framework, while retaining both his basic approach and, in essence, his case study paradigm. Our elaborations have come from three interconnected directions. We have brought a more systematic account of the relationship to psychoanalysis into the picture, including especially consideration of some of the more recent developments in object-relations theory.[1] We have tried to bring Levinson's overall

conceptualization into closer relationship with the Tavistock approach. As we shall discuss below, there are considerable convergences in the fundamental outlook of a number of 'schools' of organizational analysis, and we feel that the more integration there can be between them, the better. Lastly, we have added to Levinson's stress on diagnosis a much greater attention to planning, and in particular, to the use of formal systems-theoretical approaches to planning and management. The last two of these parts are discussed here. Psychoanalytic contributions are the subject of the next chapter.

One of the benefits of coupling the study of accountability systems to organizational diagnosis is that it emphasizes the planning aspect of the systems. While most current accountability systems--such as PPBS--were developed to provide more sophisticated, more complete, and more rational planning in organizations, their implementations have tended to focus predominantly or exclusively on static aspects. These sophisticated planning systems have been used only as elaborate filing systems; they have been used for internal 'accounting' rather than taking the ability to account as a basis for improving organizational effectiveness.

In the first part of this chapter we shall review (though stressing exemplification, not comprehensiveness) several of the approaches to organizational analysis we see as converging with our own. This will provide something of a context for considering it. It less supersedes any of these approaches than it does integrate them. Next, we shall consider systems theory as it has been used as a foundation for organizational work, dealing especially with the related notions of socio-technical and technical-behavioral systems.

Context in Organizational Analysis: There are literally dozens of approaches to the implementation and/or study of planned change in organizations. They span the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, psychology, economics, management studies, political science and public administration. They focus on individuals, small groups, whole organizations and interactions with environments. They utilize methods ranging from the intensive case study to the large-scale comparative sample. They are based on different premises about human behavior and social relations; they are used for different ends, and they produce sometimes competing, sometimes overlapping propositions. As yet no integrative framework has been developed which permits either the comparative study of the different approaches, or the isolation of the most important variables in each. For this reason, our discussions depend on the internal and idiosyncratic language of each approach. While we must wait for a fully integrative framework dealing with all this diversity, we can begin to set out convergences. We can (and do) also combine elements of these various analytic schools in our own practical framework.

Academic attempts have been made, particularly in sociology, to formulate a general theory of organizations at one or another level.[2] "Action researchers" have faulted these attempts as being "inapplicable" and "overgeneralized," and for failing to institute changes in order to study the processes of intentional change.[3] Pugh, one of the major researchers in the comparative study of organizations, also faults groundless theorizing, but suggests that it is not generality in itself which is the problem with comparative research, but the absence of an

adequate linkage between levels of focus.[4] The theories of personality and motivation which most sociologists use as a basis for their empirical research in organizations are purely speculative. Organizational sociology may also be faulted for failing to take into account the findings of "action researchers" and others using case study methodologies.

Organizational Development (OD) practitioners, however, seem to have gone just as far in the opposite direction. They appear often to believe that research and practice require little theory of any variety, and that the enterprises of theory and practice can profitably be separated. This seems a serious mistake. The number of studies in OD has multiplied in recent years[5] but these have been conducted in a largely uncoordinated fashion. Vocabularies have been idiosyncratic and methods unevenly applied. Conceptualizations have been reinvented over and over again and adapted more or less ad hoc to the demands of particular situations. The result is that it has proven difficult to assess the results of OD for many of its important aims, including productivity.[6] OD has come, in sum, to refer to a disparate variety of interventions designed to improve the effectiveness of organizations and/or the satisfaction of their members by studying interpersonal relations or using group training methods.

Friedlander and Brown define OD as a

> method for facilitating change and development in people (e.g., styles, values, skills) in technology (e.g., greater simplicity, complexity), and in organizational processes and structures (e.g., relationships, roles). (Friedlander and Brown, 1974, p. 314)

In an earlier paper, Friedlander (1972) argues that this usage is a result of congruence in organizational development, but, in fact, the convergence seems to be imposed by the generality of the definition;

it is certainly not apparent in the diversity of techniques. In particular there has been little correlation between the people-oriented approaches of OD and the more technical (including system-analytic) approaches.[7] Although many elements of its work are useful, OD does not seem to be meeting the need for a comprehensive approach to organizations. It does not generally concentrate on the organization as a whole[8] and it does not make any direct contributions to either the planning or information/decision process.

Individual-centered industrial psychology has been more unified as an approach to people in organizations. Its studies have seldom, however, used individual motivation (either with or without the intervening variable of situations) as a key to understanding organizations as such. The motivation research school is perhaps best represented by Vroom (1964) and Likert (1967). Vroom and Yetton (1973) have related this approach effectively to leadership and decision-making in the organization, but their focus is still not sufficient to deal with the organization rather than with participation. Such work, in addition, tends to underestimate the importance of the social roots of motivation (see Chapter 8). Herzberg and colleagues (1959; also Herzberg, 1966) have more directly attempted to explain organizations on the basis of "human nature" but their inquiries have had an empirical base only in motivation research, and have proven inadequate to large-scale changing situations. This research on motivation is important, however, as a corrective to economic and sociological theories which proceed generally by postulating "need" (cf. Homans, 1950, 1974) or assuming profit-seeking as universal and defined a priori motivation in organization (cf. Blau, 1964). This amounts to using a series of ungrounded assumptions in

place of available empirical research (Kroeber-Riel, 1971). It also employs exceptionally simple choice situations in order to apply its simplistic theory of motivation (Davis, 1973).

Faced with the diversity of practical approaches to organizational change, and the absence of any overarching theory, or even common conceptual framework, a number of writers have attempted recently to form integrative approaches to applied work in organizations. Most of these approaches have arisen in conjunction with some long-term consultative experience coupled with varying amounts of more discrete research. Even these approaches to commonality have been quite different. Among them, however, two seem to us to be an imporatnt supplement to Levinson's Organizational Diagnosis and the Tavistock work. These are 1) the decision-based administrative theory of Simon and his colleagues[9] and 2) the contingency theory dealing with organizational interfaces as developed by Lawrence and Lorsch,[10] dealing especially with the organization's relations with its environment. In the next few pages we shall describe each of these approaches briefly, so that their contributions to the overall framework may better be assessed. Each of these approaches, and indeed the Tavistock and Levinson approaches, is at a different level of development. Lawrence and Lorsch's theory is the one most empirically--especially quantitatively-tested, but also the most narrow. Simon's work is the most theoretically developed, but has produced little concrete empirical research. Levinson's approach is the least developed in both respects, but also the broadest, thus lending itself best to the task of synthesis. The Tavistock work is both the largest tradition and the one which has shown the most relation between empirical research, practice, and theory-building.

CONVERGENT PERSPECTIVE

Simon: Administration as Decision-Making: Criticizing most previous and concurrent management theory for offering a series of proverbs without close attention to the conditions under which they were appropriate, Simon set out in the 1930's to build an alternative. His approach was largely based on the work and teaching of Barnard (cf. 1938). Key to Simon's conceptualization is the definition of administration as decision-making. He suggests, in this regard, that not unit-decisions, but the premises on which decisions are made are the best level of analysis. These premises are of two sorts: valuative and factual. Given values and information, individuals reach decisions. Simon takes alternatives and consequences as the key factual elements with which decisions are made. The administrator attempts to detail a list of potential courses of action from which he selects those which seem "plausible." He then tries to anticipate as closely as he can the consequences (and costs) of these in order to assess how much they will meet his ends. Crucial factors are then seen to be the constraints placed on individuals' decision-making, whether through multiple ends, limited information, identification with a social group, previous training, or immediate stimuli that focus attention. It is readily apparent that such administrable commonplaces as division of tasks and flow of information have been here incorporated into an integrated scheme rather than each treated in itself.

It is also apparent how closely related this is to the aims of formal accountability, planning and management systems. Both Simon's conceptualization and the formal systems aim at making the administra-

tor's decision-making processess--their capacities and limits--explicit. Both contend that this is the way to improve them. The two differ, interestingly, in that many accountability systems seek to produce optimal plans and decisions. In other words, they assume that there is a 'best' way to do things, and that the accountability technology will provide a means of ensuring that this best way is the one followed in practice.[11] Even where system designers take care not to assume too idealistic an end-product from accountability systems, those who implement them in practice are frequently less cautious. They would do well to take some advice from Simon's insistence that administration can only be effective within certain limits, that if it exceeds these limits in the attempt to 'maximize,' that it instead forfeits the more limited efficiency it could have achieved. Neither poeple nor the systems which they use can be omniscient.

In Simon's analysis[12] there are three major categories of people involved in organizations. These are distinguished according to the motivations they have for being members of the organization.[13] Simon's categories are entrepreneurs, employees and customers. The situation may be somewhat more complex in a public agency--such as a school district --where one must decide whether representative policy-making body--legislature, school board--is the analogue of customers or entrepreneurs (cf. Simon, p. 16, et seq.). In order to have the organization, whatever it may be, exist, all the classes of people must contribute--whether funds, administration or labor--to the organization. That is, they must regard some aspect of it--pay, product or profit--as contributing sufficiently to their own ends for them to part with their resources.[14] Thus,

Simon says, one need not posit a group mind to show how collective decisions as to "organizational purposes" are made. They are made by many small decisions contributing to a large and only partially observable stream of organizational decision.[15] In a number of ways these individual decisions may not themselves be conscious. They may be the results of habit; they are influenced by span of attention, learning and memory. Unconscious motives may frequently limit the extent to which we pursue our conscious ends rationally. According to Simon:

> The central concern of administrative theory is with the boundary between the rational and the non-rational aspects of human social behavior. (Simon, 1957, p. xxiv)

Bounded rationality, not the absolute rationality postulated by economic theory, must be the concern of the administrator and the student of organizations.

Organizations themselves are set up largely to influence the decision-making of their members. They will generally be one of the most important determinants of individual decisions, but not always in the way intended.[16] Simon suggests five mechanisms of organizational influence:

1. The organization divides work among its members.
2. The organization establishes standard practices.
3. The organization transmits decisions downward (and laterally or even upward) through its ranks by establishing systems of authority and influence.
4. The organization provides channels of communication running in all directions through which information for decision-making flows.
5. The organization trains and indoctrinates its members. (Simon, 1957, pp. 102-103)

These mechanisms demonstrate that Simon's earlier mentioned suggestion that individual decisions are the stuff of organizational decisions does not constitute a psychological reductionism. In fact, it brings to the fore the importance of such considerations as the psychological style of the organization. This, of course, is something which our approach takes up in detail.

Answering earlier writers (and, in fact, later systems analysts as well) who suggest that all this can be reduced to a rationality of means and ends, Simon raises three objections to the means-ends schema:

> (a) that it obscures the comparative element in decision-making,
>
> (b) that it does not achieve a successful separation of the factual elements in decision from the value elements, and
>
> (c) that it gives insufficient recognition to the time variable in purposive behavior. (Simon, 1957, p. 66)

The comparative element refers to consideration of alternative ends which could be reached through the selection of another behavior. Ultimate ends are often vague enough--e.g., education, efficiency, equality--that the definition of shorter term ends, of the problem under immediate consideration becomes crucial. Although Simon does not explicitly take it up, we might add a further related objection to the simple means-ends approach to rational decision-making. The consequences of behaviors may be seen to converge upon each other. Where one wishes to draw the lines on the consideration of convergences is indeterminate, but important. It is not enough, generally, to say that one goes as far as is "plausible." People may look in one direction and not another because of the ways in which their jobs are defined, because of past experience with one branch of an organization, etc. In any case, where and how

far they look is an empirical question. It is, in fact, one which we have attempted to answer for the three districts with which we are primarily concerned.

We have suggested that it is insufficient to simply say administrators look as far as 'plausible.' Nonetheless, this may be a more accurate description than any assumption that there is a specific conscious rationale to where they look. This is an area about which accountability systems have been rather lax even though it is close to the heart of their functioning. Most systems concentrate a great deal of attention on goal setting, and then assume that a simple means-ends scheme will translate these goals into practice. This, as we have noted, is by no means such a simple process. More attention must be given to what Durkheim termed "those secondary and subsidiary goals which men call means." The organization of the socio-psychological life of the organization is one of the most important factors influencing this process of selection of intermediate goals--that is, means. And it should be remembered that though practices may be chosen as means to achieve one given end, they generally have effects on performance with regard to other ends. "End" should here be taken perhaps to refer to an end-state, rather than a goal. At least empirically, end-states--desired or unimagined--are all that we ever achieve. Any given means may have a number of unintended consequences (cf. Merton, 1936, 1957).

An important element in Simon's analysis is the way in which individuals identify themselves with groups, and individuals and groups identity themselves with larger organizations. We suggested above that this produces a constraint on decision-making. We might emphasize here that Simon points out--crucially--that without such constraints, decision-

making would be impossible. That is, there are such a multitude of possible values, alternative behaviors and potentially relevant sources of information that an individual who attempted to consider all of them could never act. It is in this context that Simon's famous aphorism assumes relevance: "Administrative theory is peculiarly the theory of intended and bounded rationality--of the behavior of human beings who satisfice because they have not the wits to maximize." (Simon, 1957, p. xxiv) Although accountability systems may improve the individual's handling of decisions this still remains true. Such formal systems can only extend the bounds. It is vital to remember that the bounds can never be removed.

Identification with groups or organizations focuses the individual's decision-making on certain particular goals and behaviors. In identifying with the group, the individual selects only such of the alternatives nominally open to him as will fit with the behaviors he expects from other members of his group(s). The individual may also idenify his own welfare with that of the group, and thus contribute to the support of the group in ways which do not directly benefit him.[17] On the other hand, the individual may identify with the group's original objectives and/or values in such a way that he will reject the group should it change its foci.[18] Since both continuity and flexibility are important, an organization cannot work long or well with an excess of either zealots or opportunists. It must achieve a certain balance. It must achieve a balance also in the identification of its members with their primary groups (which are subgroups from the organizational perspective) and with the organization as a whole.[19]

Groups and organizations both influence their members by determining some--but not all--of the premises upon which their decisions are based. The congruency of group and organizational influence becomes an important variable. Either may influence the individual through his set of values or through his information, or information processing abilities. Simon distinguishes the stimuli with which the organization seeks to influence the individual from the psychological set of the individual, which determines his response to the stimuli. These he terms the "external" and "internal" aspects of influence, respectively.[20] In order to understand the individual's behavior in the organization, one must understand both of these patterns of influence (see p. 125, et. seq.) The social structure of the organization may be seen, thus, to act as a determinant of even the unconscious disposition of its members. The key to Simon's theory is his conception of bounded rationality--and of the systematic, if often unconscious, character of the boundaries.

Lawrence and Lorsch: Contingency Theory: In the early 1960's, impressed by the number of recent comparative studies of organizations which stressed the interrelation of organization and environment,[21] Lawrence and Lorsch set out to develop both research and conceptualizations to integrate this into organizational work more generally. They found important further background in the work of Simon and March just noted, and in the work of the Tavistock group to be discussed below (esp. Rice, 1963). Their initial efforts included intensive studies of ten firms, stratified for performance, in a highly competitive industry. This they followed up with comparisons in different industrial environments. Their initial impression of the importance of differentiation and integration as a key organizational variables was confirmed,

as was their hypothesis that environmental conditions constituted a major independent variable to which organizations adapted their structures and processes either more or less well. One of their most important achievements was recognizing the variable nature of this adaptation and demonstrating its relation to productivity. Earlier writers had tended to speak of adaptation in simple causal terms applied generally across situations.

What Lawrence and Lorsch showed[22] was that the most effective organizations in any given environment achieved the balance of differentiation and integration best suited to that environment. There is no best balance in absolute--rather than contingent--terms. They thus treat management of differentiation and integration as the essential adaptive task of organizations. Drawing on much recent social psychology, they also suggest the important positive functions of conflict (especially as it is worked through) in achieving integration. In an important supplement to Simon and March, they show how effective decision-making depends on the level in the organization at which decisions are made, and how the most effective level depends on the environment. This is a variable not taken adequately into consideration by most accountability systems. They tend to prescribe a static, fixed decision-making structure rather than one which is responsive to environmental variables which will affect its efficiency.

In the diverse and rapidly changing environment of the plastics industry, for example, it is necessary for many decisions to be made at relatively low levels of administration because of their specialized nature and/or the need for immediate response. Similarly, different kinds of decisions are appropriate to different levels. Thus questions

of major capital expenditure need to be made fairly high up. As Woodward has shown, however, (op., cit., see also 1965), there is a large proportion of the decisions made only in certain highly capital intensive industries. In other cases--sales, for example[23]--responsiveness to customer demand is more crucial, demand more flexible and decisions correspondingly more likely to be made at lower levels. In such cases, the relative importance of each decision, that is, its potential cost, is much less. For this reason it is impractical to attempt to centralize such decision-making because of the loss of responsiveness and the cost of superintending so many decisions. Education conforms much more to this sort of 'labor-intensive' model than it does to the capital-intensive one of certain production industries. Decisions have very largely to be made by practicing teachers in the classroom. There is no effective way to centralize these decisions. The accountability system implementations we have studied, however, tend to place considerable value on centralization.[24]

Many of the same issues which affect the variance among organizations may also be seen to affect the attitudes and actions of different departments or other operational units within the same organization. Thus departmental specialization may be required to deal with the scientific, market, and techno-economic sectors, respectively, but this same specialization means that each will have a different approach to issues that arise. In the case of schools, it is easy to see these distinctions in style between teachers, building administrators, and central office or research and development personnel. This is only a matter of subgroup loyalties, although these are certainly important as well. This is primarily a matter of the kind of environment to which

the different groups are in the habit of responding, the information which they have about the dependence of their portion of the organization on the whole, and their impression of the extent to which they are able to influence the whole. Some of the factors go into differentiating the style of different departments are a) the clarity of information with which they generally work, b) the uncertainty of causal relationships in their tasks and c) the time span of definitive feedback regarding their performance. Lawrence and Lorsch combine these three factors in a total uncertainty score. It is readily apparent how such measures of uncertainty relate to the propositions Simon put forward about the necessity to satisfice rather than maximize in administrative situations. It also demonstrates how total organizational integration is an impossible (as well as probably undesirable) goal. There are concrete and continuingly necessary reasons for many of the conflicting aims and styles in organizations, not only retrospective or genetic ones.[25]

"Contingency theory" is the name given by Lawrence and Lorsch to their attempt to pull together recent findings in organizational research. A number of earlier works also brought task and environmental variables into the foreground in a variety of different types of studies from the social psychology of small groups (Leavitt, 1962) to the large-scale comparison of work in 'primitive' societies (Udy, 1959, 1964). We have already mentioned earlier industrial sociology on which they drew.[26] They also emphasize the importance of earlier more psychological studies of individual predispositions in relation to performance in different types of organizations, environmental or task situations. Fiedler (1962, 1967) found that different kinds of leadership style paid off in high group performance under different conditions. Vroom (1960) reversed

the order of variables, and found that the impact of opportunities for participation in management had greater effect on certain personality types (e.g., "egalitarians") than on others (e.g., "authoritarians"). In an earlier study Lawrence had found that there was no universal response to variance in job complexity among the members of his sample. Rather, two sets of workers brought different orientations toward work into their jobs. One group--labelled "city"--saw it as an unpleasant means to a desirable end. The other--labelled "town"--saw it as worthwhile in and of itself, as serving an expressive and/or moral function.[27] A number of recent writers have taken work on organizations and their environments further, with Child outstanding among them.[28]

The most important contribution of Lawrence and Lorsch is the demonstration--sometimes explicit, sometimes implicit--that the conceptual frameworks of Simon, March and others, usually phrased abstractly, can still be translated into (and borne out by) concrete empirical research designs. Their own contributions to theory are research on and analysis of certain particular types of contingencies, rather than an overall conceptualization. A wide range of organizational issues are left untouched. Moreover, they provide no single concept or set of concepts which is sufficient to unify the diverse aspects of organizational operation. The same points may be made with regard to other research work in the same vein. Valuable though it is, it is inadequate to the need for a perspective on the organization as a whole. This approach provides new information, but produces no framework within which to deal integratively with it and with the varieties of older knowledge.

Levinson: Organizational Diagnosis: Levinson's major work has been on industrial mental health (1961, 1962, 1964), the psychology of

motivation (1974) and of leadership (1968, 1969, 1970). These contributions are of secondary relevance to the present discussion. The contribution of Levinson to our enterprise comes mainly through his conceptualization of and suggestions for "organizational diagnosis" (1972). With this he helps to deal with what must be the first step in putting a model of planned change into practice. Diagnosing the state of the organization, including both its particular immediate problems and its long-range styles of operation must come before any sustained effort at change. Organizations reveal infinite subtle variations, and it is largely following Levinson's emphasis on the organization as subject of (an analogue to) psychoanalysis that we begin to be able to treat these variations consistently. Psychoanalysis provides a language for this treatment. It is, although not perfect, an ordered set of conceptualizations for the consideration of order, disorder, development and change in partially purposive systems.

The shape which Levinson's suggestions regarding organizational diagnosis took was much influenced by his own earlier training and work in psychoanalytically based industrial psychology. Levinson attempts to treat organizations 'clinically,' and details the similarities between the role of consultant and that of therapist. This leads to an emphasis on the training and skill--both intuitive and formal--of the practitioner as a specialist. The diagnostician cannot simply apply a number of hard and fast rules to organizations with different backgrounds, memberships and settings. He must produce a sensitive and coherent picture of each organization individually. For Levinson, this stress on the diagnosis of the organization grew directly out of the attempt to treat individual emotional problems in organizations. He came to the

conclusion that the sources of these problems could frequently be found only in the situation, not in the individual. This led him to look for a way to conceptualize maladaptations of organizations.[29] Individual crises and disturbances appeared to be symptoms of more basic organizational issues. But, as he notes:

> There are no widely accepted comprehensive diagnostic procedures for assessing and evaluating organizations comparable, for example, to the examination process in medicine. (Levinson, 1972, p. 5)

The diagnostic approach which Levinson sets out to develop draws on psychoanalytic theory for its approach and terminology, and on Menninger's work for its specific outlines.[30]

Levinson's book is brief in discussing the theoretical basis for his approach. But it would be unfair to carry this line of criticism too far, for the book was not intended as theoretical treatise, but as a practical manual for consultancy. Herein lies its special relevance. We shall set out our adaptation of Levinson's diagnostic procedure as part of our implementation model in Chapter VIII. In Chapter III we shall develop the theoretical underpinnings further, relating them especially to more recent work in psychoanalysis, the study of groups, and especially to the Tavistock approach to organizations. We mention it briefly here only to indicate that it too is part of the convergence in theoretical positions which contributes to our ability to speak comprehensively about organizations as wholes.[31]

Like several other writers,[32] Levinson takes the organic analogy --in particularly an open systems approach--as his foundation. He then asks what conditions a living system must fulfill, and suggests three: it must "maintain equilibrium"

1. among its internal subsystems.
2. between itself as a system and other systems.
3. between itself and the larger systems of which it is a part. (following Levinson, 1972, p. 4)

Levinson's approach actually seems to place too much stress on equilibrium. Lawrence, Lorsch, Woodward, Miller and Rice have all shown how the different rates of change in environments--even the simple categorical difference between 'stable' and 'changing' environments--influence organizational structures and their effectiveness.[33] Levinson's own concrete analyses do not fall into this problem as much as his general discussions however. He carefully takes up a number of the ways in which change itself can be an important organizational issue.[34] This is particularly relevant to educational institutions, which place a high value on innovation, and yet are often highly invested in traditional values and relationships. An ideology of change is thus pervasive, and a resistance to change is endemic. This paradox is paralleled by shifting patterns of community support and demands.

In this sense, Levinson is aware that organizations are seldom able to maintain 'equilibria' over long periods of time. Rather, he uses an equilibrium model to consider their changes,[35] and, importantly, he notes the tendency of people to think of organizations in continuous terms. That is, he notes that because organizations have considerably longer life-spans than do individuals, the latter tend to think of the former as unchanging. This allows them to establish a relation of dependency, in which they attempt to make the organization compensate for insecurities in other areas of their lives. When an organization does change, people often feel abandoned, or even betrayed.

But of course organizations must change. There is good reason, however, to question the prevailing ideology of education that change is always a good thing. Miller and Rice's concept of the primary task

can be helpful in elucidating this issue.[36] Maintaining an equilibrium is a metaphor for the long-range course of events which characterize the organization's process of survival. But it is an inadequate description of the organization's primary tasks at any point or points in time. These refer to the immediate things which the organization--or organism--must do to survive. Hierarchies of needs[37] may be used to describe the relative and varying importance of different kinds of tasks. The major point, however, is that equilibrium is only one of a number of possible patterns of successful achievement of primary tasks over time. Few modern industries or public agencies could be described as operating in equilibrium. This seems to be no more than a dream of weary administrators.

As Levinson emphasizes, following psychoanalytic discussions, the organization's past never falls completely behind it. It remains a crucial dimension of present functioning. It is incapsulated in people's expectations of the organization, in its unconscious modes of operation and in its structure. The very existence of clear expectations of an organization--positive or negative--requires some continuity. An organization which changes too much and/or too rapidly can easily find that its members perceive it as chaotic--no matter how rational and systematic the changes chosen may have been. On the other hand, some organizations may appear (to their members or to outsiders) as unchanging, as inexorably wedded to their procedures, stuck in their ways. Such organizations are likely to seem hopeless to their more creative members, and thus to attract those whose dominant needs are for security. Accusations of this sort are often levelled against public agencies (in implicit or explicit contrast

with private enterprise). Such differences between public and private agencies are not simple, but rather a more complex interplay of organizational purpose and style. One overarching factor in the contrast comes from the fact that private industry has a clear and rationable index of performance--profit.[38] Public enterprises like education, however, tend to have only very vague and incomparable goals. One may readily compare the profits made from compact vs. luxury car sales, but how can one compare the benefits of education for 'citizenship' with those for 'self-reliance'? On a more concrete level, planners and administrators are constantly trying to compare, say, the gain from foreign language instruction with that from physical sciences--and both with vocational education. It is perhaps no wonder that educational institutions tend toward either the avoidance of changes or the institution of an overwhelming number of them.

No matter what resolution of this conflict is made by current managerial policy, however, the past of the organization will continue to have great impact. It will influence who the members of the organization are, what its reputation is, into what structural units it is divided, and what resources are at its disposal, as well as what people's feelings and expectations about it are. It is for these reasons, among others, that we, like Levinson, came to emphasize the importance of the retrospective case study approach to organizational analysis. Many of the effects of the organizational past are not readily visible. It is, therefore, necessary to investigate this past directly. Such a procedure allows the analyst to construct a detailed account of trends as well as current structure in the organization. In addition, the very process of the investigation allows the organi-

zation to give itself new coherence. In some organizations this takes the form of bringing repressed material from its past into consciousness. This allows for a reintegration of past and present, and for greater flexibility. Other organizations may need not to relax repressions but to create order. Retrospective inquiry can help them bring a sense of continuity to a past that has previously appeared chaotic. The organization can then view itself as rational in its development, rather than simply responsive to external pressures, or indeed, chance.

SYSTEMS THINKING: This discussion rather begs the question of how we are to think of the organization. We have said that we treat it 'as a whole,' and by means of 'the organic analogy.' Exactly what do these terms mean? We cannot hope to settle an old epistemological debate concerning them here, but will simply set out what we understand by them, what sorts of 'systems' we are referring to. In the process, this will give an indication of why we think conceptualizations developed regarding individuals can be applied by direct analogy to organizations.

Other writers have claimed to treat 'whole' organizations, either academically or in application, but their claims are frequently inaccurate. Argyris, for example, has suggested that Blau's claim to focus on:

> the system of interrelated elements that characterize the organization as a whole, not its component parts (Blau, 1965, p. 326)

is spurious. Blau has, according to Argyris (1974), attempted to study the whole <u>without</u> its component parts. Such a focus on one level equates the organization with its formal or its macro-structural aspects.[39]

> Although Blau states that he is studying organizations as wholes, he does not present a conceptual or operational definition of this view of reality. It may be more accurate to say that he is studying only a part of organization, or organizations without formal or informal subdivisions. (Argyris, 1974, p. 18)

Argyris' own work may be faulted, however, for failing to take important structural variables into account. His concentration on "openness" or "authencity" of communication, while valid, does not provide a comprehensive theory. At best he treats the rest of organizations as that which members will get on with once their emotional/communicative difficulties are cleared up. The careful attention to the organizational sources of these problems which is so evident in the work of most Tavistock researchers, for example, is missing in Argyris.[40]

One of the serious questions involved in this controversy is the meaning of organizational change. Argyris emphasizes a perspective in which organizations are seen as satisfying (or failing to satisfy) their members' socio-psychological needs. Such satisfaction is apparently regarded as prerequisite to adequate task performance and stability over time. Such an individualistic/psychological approach[41] falters, however, in that it takes the structure of the organization as a completely malleable category. In addition, it adopts an implicit stress on relatively equilibrious organizational functioning. It assumes, in a sense, that organizations can work smoothly <u>but for these socio-psychological considerations</u>. It is thus a micro-sociological side to the same coin as functionalist macro-sociology. The latter assumes that the organization meets environmental needs in a stable manner, and reduces its problems to failures to adapt to external changes in values.[42] The two approaches are each one-sided,

but even together they leave out an important dynamic: As Blau and Scott put it:

> If we conceive of social systems as meeting basic needs and requisites, the implicit assumption is that adjustment prevails and change does not occur unless new external conditions require adjustments. But if we conceive of social systems as being confronted by dilemmas, that is, by choices between alternatives in which any choice may sacrifice some valued objective in the interest of another, the implicit assumption is that problems are endemic and, therefore, serve as a continual internal source of change in the system. (Blau and Scott, 1962, p. 222)

Burns[43] has suggested that extensive external change leads to a different sort of organization than a stable environment (a point we have already touched on). He posits:

> two 'ideal types' of working organization, the one mechanistic, adapted to relatively stable conditions, the other, 'organismic,' adapted to conditions of change. (Blau and Scott, 1962, p. 47)

Such a distinction seems apt, with regard to the impact of environment on organization--but what of internal contradictions? Organizational structure is not infinitely flexible in meeting new environmental demands, nor is it unambiguous in its approach or unambivalent in its evaluation of the environment. Further, as we have suggested above, organizations bring varying ability to make decisions regarding the environment to bear. This is not simply a matter of skills of information gathering, organizing and analysis. It is also a matter of the social bonds which tie the organization together. Too much change in some directions will always mean the dissolution of these bonds. Too little may allow them to become rigid and prevent future responsiveness to the environment.

The organization's response to its environment is not automatic, but purposive. That is, someone (or everyone) within the organization must decide how it is to act. To be sure, many such decisions are unconscious, the result of inevitably inadequate planning or of habit. Nonetheless, they are decisions inasmuch as they represent the selection among options. The degree of consistency of such decisions--over time or among different constituents of the organization--is an important empirical variable. But such organizational decision-making can only be understood in the context of a systems-perspective which gives full weight to the discontinuities and conflicts of organizations as well as their continuities and integration. Most formal systems theory, however, construct complete, and thus in a sense ideal-types, of structures. In other words, it produces a model which is supposed to work. More recently, following especially the work of von Bertalanffy,[44] writers have emphasized 'open-systems' perspectives, which give new weight to transactions across the boundaries of organizations. Recent writers have also paid more attention to disjunctions within the systems, though an adequate theory of internal contradictions has yet to be developed in this context. Psychoanalysis is a theory crucially founded on the consideration of internal contradictions, and bringing it into relationship with general systems theory has proven productive.

This, for example, is the framework which Miller and Rice take up; as do Emery, Trist, Jacques and other Tavistock workers. Explicitly adopting the open-systems model, Miller and Rice emphasize the analogy with biological organisms, and particularly the existence of import-conversion-export processes. By these the organization provides for

its internal maintenance and carries out its relationships with the external environment.

> What distinguishes a system from an aggregate of activities and preserves its boundary is the existence of regulation. (Miller and Rice, 1967, p. 8)

> The boundary round a system of activities is not simply a line but a region with two boundaries, one between the internal activities of the system and the region of regulation, and a second between the region of regulation and the environment. For this form of regulation we use the term boundary control function. (op. cit., pp. 8-9)

How this regulation is carried out becomes, thus, a crucial problem for investigation. Accountability systems are both internal regulatory mechanisms and aspects or tools of boundary control. At best they deal both with the entire throughput of the organization, with its bounded identity, and with its extension in time. Misused, accountability systems may partially take the place of real leadership, may allow some administrators to gain an excess of control, or may simply be guidelines for a process of 'demobilization,' in which the organization tones down the level of its internal activity, and especially the extent of its boundary transactions and throughput.

The 'throughput' aspects of accountability systems--like their planning components--tend often to be forgotten. As Emery and Trist have noted, though:

> the primary task in managing the enterprise is to relate the total system to its environment and is not in internal regulation per se. (Emery and Trist, 1960, p. 292)

This means that the system itself, as it already exists, should not be the primary focus of managerial attention.[45]

> In general the leadership of an enterprise must be willing to break down an old integrity or create profound discontinuity if such steps are required to take advantage of changes in technology and markets. (ibid.)

Despite this emphasis, however, Emery and Trist do assume that the organization in general achieves steady states following periods of change. We would suggest that there are varying rates of change, but never a steady state. The notion that there can be is produced a) by the greater than individual size and longer time-span of the organization, and b) by an excessive emphasis on the formal and technological components of the organization, which can only change in discrete units, as opposed to social changes which are continuous.

Organizations, though they are analogous systems to biological organisms, do not have such finely balanced internal relations, such discrete boundaries, nor such efficient regulating mechanisms. A key reason for both of the first two of these differences is that the individuals who act in organizations cannot be entirely specialized to their intra-organizational roles. Organs and elements of the human body have no other functions to perform than those which are part of the organism. The heart is thus a full-time constituent of the body; its organismic role does not conflict with any other role in another system. Organizations attempt to produce the same sort of specialization among their members, but are unable to meet with as much success:

> From the standpoint of organization as a formal system, persons are viewed functionally, in respect to their roles, as participants in assigned segments of the cooperative system. But in fact individuals have a propensity to resist depersonalization, to spill over the boundaries of their segmentary roles,

> to participate as wholes.... The whole individual raises new problems for the organization, partly because of the needs of his own personality, partly because he brings with him a set of established habits as well, perhaps, as commitments to special groups outside of the organization. (Selznick, 1948, p. 26)

This does not mean that the organization ceases to be a system, or to have its own identity as distinct from those of its members. On the contrary, even these members will generally attribute an identity (although not always the same identity) to the organization. Inasmuch as they participate as wholes, they simply add much greater complexity to the organization and to our attempts to understand it. They limit the adequacy of formal systems, they do not negate the existence of the organization as a whole. As Selznick notes:

> The organic, emergent character of the formal organization considered as a cooperative system must be recognized. This means that the organization reaches decisions, takes action, and makes adjustments. (Selznick, 1948, p. 27)

Emery and Trist have introduced the term 'socio-technical systems' to describe the interface of two distinct organizing principles in the organization. Social relations and technical tasks may be either more or less convergent in the organization. In an enterprise --public or private--it is fruitless to think of either as a prime value without the other. Thus,

> Grouping produces its main psychological effects when it leads to a system of work roles such that the workers are primarily related to each other by way of the requirements of task performance and task interdependence. (Emery and Trist, 1960, p. 289)

Thus work group autonomy should not necessarily be maximized in all occupational situations. There can be few if any hard and fast rules to apply to such social aspects of organizations without considerations of their tasks and the technological constraints on them. We would add a further dimension to the distinction Emery and Trist have drawn. Social aspects of organization should not be considered a single unitary category. It is important to differentiate the formal task-oriented social relations of members from their emotional bonds. This is the distinction Miller and Rice have analyzed under the rubrics task and sentient organization.[46] Both may be organizations of social relations. Now, modern management often amounts to producing a new form of technology--such as accountability systems. These systems have their own technological constraints to impose, just as production processes do, and yet what they are intended to produce are particulars of behavior, not of throughput.

These, thus, are 'technical-behavioral systems.' They do not admit of dichotomization as either social or technical, but are always both. This is a suggestion of the value which they may ultimately fulfill in the effort to unite the technical and social aspects of organizations rather than letting them compete with each other. However, it is also an indication of the complexity of problems which they will produce. They cannot be applied to the technical-task-oriented side of organization without affecting the sentient side. If accountability systems are taken seriously, and applied to organizations as wholes, then they will serve as a constant reminder that the organization is a socio-technical system, and not just an impersonal or arbitrary way of getting things done.

Accountability Systems: The technical organization of work cannot fruitfully be separated from the social and psychological relations of workers, either in practice or in research. To overemphasize the latter is to forget the primary purpose of the organization's existence. To ignore psychosocial relations, however, is to generally let them become impediments to work rather than motivations for solid effort. An adequate approach to organizations must deal with both of these, as different aspects of a common phenomenon. That phenomenon is the life of the organization as a whole. It is determined by the constraints of its task, by the capacities of its regulatory functions, by resources and by the inter-relationships of its members. Members contribute nothing as isolated individuals, for as such they are not members of the organization. They become members as soon as they start interacting, either face to face or by more indirect forms of communication and reciprocal influence.

Accountability systems are efforts to understand, regulate and plan this interaction of people as members of the organization. Without the people, there is nothing to be accounted for, none to do the accounting and no one to report to. Thus when one speaks of accounting for resources, one is talking about accounting for what people have done with resources, or failed to do. Accountability systems are not the efforts of individual managers to understand this process--though such efforts are certainly necessary, with or without an accountability system. Rather, they are a socio-technical subcomponent of the organization as a whole. In this they are much like

a production system in industry, or indeed the more complex system which relates production activities to sales, billing, planning, purchasing and so forth. Ideally, they are sufficiently formalized to produce internally compatible and nationally interpretable data. They can never be so formalized, however, that they do not depend on people--individually and in groups, with all the respective foibles of each--at all levels. An accountability system which was so formal would really exist only on paper and not in practice.

As a socio-technical system, an accountability program will involve persons and groups which are already components in varying combinations of other socio-technical systems. It may reinforce their previous identities, or it may conflict with them. It will not be able to instantly eradicate them. Organization members have personal identities within the whole as the result of their various characteristics, feelings and attachments, and participation in role relations and groups. These identities are important, for both the individuals and the organization. For the former they are a protection against anxiety, aimlessness and alienation. For the latter they are the mechanism by which the individual finds his place in the overall organizational process and makes his contribution to its ends. Clearly it is important that these identities be congruent with the aims of the organization's management, if formal goals are to be fulfilled. If they are not, people's perceptions of their places in the organization will be at odds with management's expectations of them.

Accountability systems are designed to alleviate this potential conflict, among other things. Such common components of accountability

programs as collective goal setting, management by objectives, and attempts to agree on specific performance measures are efforts toward bringing members in line with management as far as aims and expectations are concerned. Two important factors have limited the efficacy of accountability systems thus far implemented in reaching this goal. First, they have generally failed to realize that the accountability system itself imposed a whole new set of boundaries on organization members which were likely themselves to conflict with their social and psychological identities. Groups which work together have been split for evaluation purposes, for example, each partial group being lumped with another, with which it did not feel the same sense of identification. Secondly, accountability implementations have failed to fully recognize the existence of socio-technical systems as such, instead operating with the assumption that task performance could readily be treated separately. Our research, together with less developed suggestions in prior evaluations, indicates that this is not so.

That some attention would have to be paid to social and psychological issues in implementing accountability systems has been realized by most technical writers on the subject all along. But none has given an explicit and comprehensive statement of what this relationship should be. Even if they had, however, there is no reason to believe that this would have been sufficient to radically alter the course of implementations. There are sound social-psychologcial reasons for the misunderstandings which have occurred. That is, not only are there such reasons for social and psychological problems, there are such reeasons for technical errors in implementation. This is so because accountability systems are not purely technical systems which just happen to have

social implications. Their aims are largely behavioral, and their implementation must be almost wholly so. They are socio-technical systems in the same way that the educational enterprise as whole is.

Notes

1. Some of these psychoanalytic developments are less recent, than they are currently gaining acceptance and notice in America, especially those of Kleinans.

2. For example, see Blau (1974); Blau and Schoenherr (1971); Blau and Scott (1962); Crozier (1964); Etzioni (1961a and b); Gouldner (1954, 1959); Parsons (1961, 1964); Silverman (1970); Stinchcombe (1965).

3. For counter-examples, see Friedlander and Brown (1974); French and Bell (1973); Argyris (1974).

4. Pugh et al. (1968); Pugh et al. (1975).

5. See such reviews as D.S. Pugh et al (1975); Friedlander and Brown (1974); Alderfer (1974); Beckhard (1969); Beer (1974); Strauss (1973); Margulies and Raia (1972); Burke (1972); Clark and Krone (1972); French and Bell (1973).

6. Greiner (1967); Buchanon (1971); Bowers (1973).

7. But see Levine et al (1972).

8. Although there are exceptions, see Lawrence and Lorsch (1969).

9. Simon (1957); March and Simon (1958); Thompson (1967).

10. See Lawrence and Lorsch (1969).

11. Note that not all accountability systems are maximizing. Some are sub-optimal.

12. The following draws primarily on Simon (1957).

13. Motivation can effectively be considered a matter of the ways in which people benefit from organizations. See Blau and Scott (1962); Blau (1968) on "Who Benefits? Typologies."

14. Payment--rewards translatable into monetary terms--is not the only return people may receive from organizations. There are, of course, many secondary factors influencing such participation--a pleasant work group, for example. Pay remains, howerver, the primary incentive for coming to most work organizations in the first place. Although people may choose less lucrative positions for reasons of, say, interest, some pay seems a necessary condition of their contribution to the enterprise. As recent teacher contract demands have demonstrated, this is occupying a larger place in the minds of many educators.

15. An interesting light is thrown on this by Ekeh's (1974) consideration of the two traditions in exchange theory with regard to the question of "generalized exchange."

16. Interestingly, Vroom has recently turned his attention to studies of normative vs. descriptive analyses of decision-making in organizations as well. See Vroom and Jago (1974); Jago and Vroom, (1975).

17. See also discussion in March and Simon, Organizations, Chapter 4, of the motivational constraints of people's decisions to participate. Clearly, accountability systems are often used as attempts to replace this sort of motivation with coercion. Our research indicates that there are sufficient shared goals to form the basis of cooperation without extensive coercive systems.

18. Where there are goal conflicts in educational administration, they are often of this nature. Some administrators and teachers, for example, may chafe at being asked to sacrifice an earlier primary emphasis on excellence for either efficiency or economy.

19. This is a problem taken up excellently by Lawrence and Lorsch; see below.

20. This usage parallels the familiar psychological distinction between set and setting as, for example, the two factors that influence experience under a psychedelic drug--or indeed, in general. In fact the set/setting balance may be a useful way of describing a dimension of the variance between "normal" and "altered" states of consciousness. Organizations too reveal the influence of both set and setting--as in school systems' perceptions of community demands or expectations.

21. The most important of these were J. Woodward (1958); Burns and Stalker (1961).

22. 1967c is their major report. Other joint publications from this research are 1967a, 1967b, and 1965. 1969 is an elaboration of theoretical and especially practical issues. In discussing Lawrence and Lorsch we draw also on the related publications of several other authors doing similar research.

23. See also Miller and Rice (1967).

24. This may be due to the fact that central administrators are much more closely involved in deciding to implement accountability systems. In organizations is a large proportion of decisions needed to be made by lower level line personnel, therefore, Central administrators may become very uneasy about their lack of control. Implementing an accountability system is often a response to this situational insecurity.

25. Genetic reasons are prominent in Levinson's analysis of such situations. See Levinson (1972).

26. See Woodward (1965); Burns and Stalker (1961); also Fouraker (1967) in an unpublished manuscript cited by Lawrence and Lorsch; Chandler (1962).

27. Turner and Lawrence (1965). A criticism could be leveled against the labellings as these seem to indicate coincidental rather than direct classifications of the two populations, but the impact of the findings themselves is useful. See also Gouldner (1957).

28. Child (1972a and b); Child and Mansfield (1972); Hickson et al. (1971); Pugh et al. (1969); Emery and Trist (1965); Rice (1963).

29. Although Levinson does not develop the point, this is the same argument which leads us to the stress the importance of treating organizations as wholes.

30. Menninger (1962, 1963). Levinson was at one time head of the industrial psychology division of the Menninger Institute.

31. Levinson's work appears in this report less as a topic of discussion than as a catalyst for undertaking the discussion.

32. Notably Miller and Rice (as discussed in the next chapter) and Emery and Trist (discussed later in this chapter).

33. Rice's discussion is both seminal and very useful on this. See Rice (1958).

34. Levinson (1972, pp. 29, 137-143, 280-284).

35. An approach vigorously defended by Gluckman (1968).

36. Miller and Rice (1967); and see discusssion in Chapter III below.

37. Maslow (1943). For application in an organization setting, see also Hall and Nougaim (1968).

38. Even in the private sector, such ambiguities as the relative stress on short-term profits vs. long-term growth and security, make matters complex.

39. This criticism is actually only valid for part of Blau's work. His earlier studies concentrated on informal relations. See Blau (1964). The work which Argyris is criticizing is part of Blau's ongoing research on the comparative study of organizations.

40. Any of Argyris' general books will provide adequate reference; one of the most recent of these is Management and Organizational Development (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971).

41. In the next chapter, we attempt to show how our psycho-analytic approach does not involve a reduction to the level of individual, group, and organization. The individual is seen as inseparable from his social reltions.

42. For discussion of a value-oriented perspective on organizations, see Parsons (1961, 1964).

43. See Burns and Stalker (1961).

44. See 1950 for a summary. Von Bertalanffy was primarily concerned with the physical sciences, but attempted to build a general systems theory. For a good selection of relevant work on systems thinking, especially in relation to organization, see Emery (1971).

45. Emery and Trist indicate that they regard their approach as differing from that of structural-functional analysis which postulates "that the basic need of all empirical systems is the maintenance of the integrity and continuity of the system itself" (Selznick, 1948, p. 268). They overemphasize the difference however. Selznick, for example, does stress the self-impelled nature of organizational transformations--even in response to external conditions. Emery and Trist place rather more confidence than seems justified in the notion that "such systems spontaneously reorganize toward states of greater heterogeneity and complexity and that they will achieve a "steady state" at a level where they can still do work" (Selznick, 1968, pa. 282). The assumption of both "steady-states" and "spontaneous" changes in them seems dubious.

46. Miller and Rice (1967). See discussion in Chapter III, the last part.

Chapter III

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND ORGANIZATION ANALYSIS

Psychoanalytic theory deals with the individual and the small group directly as its primary subject matter. Obviously, the ways in which individuals and groups fit into larger organizations are important to our inquiry. Psychoanalysis has, however, a further contribution to make. It provides a general theory and a clinical procedure both of which can, with certain modifications, be extended to organization analysis. That is, the organization itself may be taken as the unit of a psychoanalytic inquiry. As a manifestation of the aggregate (or perhaps more complexly interrelated) psychological lives of its membership, it comes to have a psychological life of its own. Of course, it does not in any sense 'contain' all of the psychological life of any of its members--some may be more devoted than others. Each member may, however, be viewed as bringing a certain psychological content to the organization. Each of these elements is a sort of building block, as units of experience are to the individual. Tied together into an organic whole, these units constitute the stuff of the organization, psychologically. They are like many variables expressed as a single function.

In this sense, the extension of psychoanalytic conceptualizations to organizations proceeds on the basis of an organic analogy. It assumes that the parts of an organization are related to each other as the parts of organism are related. It assumes the existence, in short, of a "whole." This is the foundation of the psychoanalytic conception of organizational consultation--treating the organization

as a whole, and not simply dealing with those parts of it which are expressing its overall problems at any one point in time. The style and technique of a clinical approach to organizations and their problems are not however our primary concern here. Rather, we are interested in the theory of human relations and the intrapsychic and behavioral manifestations which it provides. We shall thus attempt to set out briefly the rudiments of this approach to the levels of individual, groups and organization. We shall not attempt to explain all the controversies and differences of approach or opinion within modern psychoanalysis. Rather, we shall offer those contributions which seem most helpful to us in providing a theoretical underpinning for our approach to the organization as a whole. As we have noted above, these come primarily from the Freudian tradition as elaborated and refined by Melanie Klein, her followers and various associates who may collectively be termed the 'object relations' school.

In the last chapter we cited Miller and Rice's assertion that the Tavistock approach based on object relations can be extended without fundamental modification to individual, group and large organizational levels.[1] This is a proposition with which we agree, and which is central to our approach. The reason that the same analytic structure is appropriate to all three levels is that all three are instances of the same principles of psycho-social organization. All three are organizations. When we use the term 'organization,' generally, we refer only to relatively large organizations, those which are not constructed on a basis of face-to-face or other direct communication. This difference of complexity, however, does

not alter the fundamental characteristics. These are consistent because they are founded on a set of limited concepts concerning human potentials for interaction with the environment. The psychoanalytic theory of the individual is fundamentally a social theory: a theory of the growth of the individual within the family, a set of influential others.[2] Freud's great achievement was not (as is sometimes popularly thought) to simply look deep within the individual for the source of whatever probelems present themselves on the surface. In the first place, the kind of problems most crucially addressed by psychoanalysis deal with the interface of individual and environment, usually with interpersonal relations of one form or another, either directly or at some level of symbolic abstraction. Still more importantly, the sort of internal 'evidence' the psychoanalyst seeks concerns the same sort of boundary issues, as they influence growth at crucial early stages of development. It concerns the way in which the child forms (or is unable to form) relations with his parents and siblings.

These early experiences in relationships form the foundation of the individual's psychic structure. They predispose the way in which he will view later experiences of others and the way in which he will see himself. They help and or cause him to differentiate his view of himself and of the world in one fashion rather than another. As the child identifies (and then sees and works through the problems in his identification of) himself with objects in his environment, he develops his own identity. Later, this mechanism is used again by individuals to form identifications of themselves and others in organizations. It is central to the mechanisms of unconscious group formation and the exist-

ence of the phenomena of apparent "group mind." And, it is the core reason for the existence of relations to the organization as a unit--rather than as a collection of component parts. As quotations in our case studies show,[3] members of a school district find it quite easy to describe it as though it were a person. This is a function of the basic underlying psychical mechanism of projective identification.

Academic justifications for treating organizations as wholes have usually been considerations of the status of the "organic analogy." Coming to the forefront in 19th Century French social thought, but in fact much older, this is the treatment of human psychical and social organization with the conceptualizations developed to empirically describe plants and animals.[4] This analogy (or metaphor) is also the nature of our description of organizations as wholes. Psychoanalysis adds one element, however, to the analogy: this is the extent to which such perception of organic wholes takes place as a necessary (or at least apparently universal) part of group formation.[5] The organic analogy is not a purely artifical and abstract device employed by social scientists to describe phenomena. It does not necessarily introduce a unity which is not present in the facts. Rather, the organic analogy is a way in which people in general tend to conceive of those phenomena which confront them as a unity. Of course, it remains a metaphor or an analogy. Groups do not exist physically apart from their members. But, as Thomas pointed out, it is participants' definitions of the situation which is crucial: that which people define as true is true for them, and is the true foundation of their action.[6] The "organization as person" is not just a legal fiction concerning corporations; it is a psycho-social reality.

The organization may also be seen as a person by a greater stretch of analogy when we emphasize the extent to which its patterns of operation are interrelated. When an organization takes action, one component may be responsible for the planning and/or executive operations. But the whole organization is involved. This is so because the environment responds to the whole organization. If, for example, the allocation of funds to education is cut because of a dissatisfaction with performance, this cut in funds will not be restricted in impact to whatever part of the system originally provoked (or was identified as provoking) the displeasure. Some writers and practitioners seem to feel that a function of accountability systems is to accomplish this relation of dissatisfaction to 'punishment.' Such a view is, however, in error. In the first place, all actions with regard to an organization have a sort of 'ripple effect' by which they influence all the other component parts of the organization and the balance among them. In the second place, concern must never be focused on punishment, rather than efficacy. Punishment is only useful as it is directly related to future effectiveness, and it is seldom so related. Imagine an administrator who thought like this: teaching is inadequte, let us eliminate teaching! Of course no one would, but less extreme forms of this logic are not uncommon. If one fails to remember the interrelationship of the parts of an organization, it is easy to think that you can solve problems in one part simply by changing or removing it. But this is seldom so. Since the part is engaged in a complex set of transactions with its environment (which includes elements both inside and outside the organization), a change (in it) will affect these other parts. Further, if influences from the environment, including other parts of the

organization remain constant, they will tend to force the original part back into its problematic mode of functioning. In sum, it is necessary to keep constantly in mind that the organization a) is interrelated to form (an approximation to) a functional whole, and b) is treated as a unit by members and outsiders alike.

The crucial factor in both of these kinds of relationship, both kinds of construction of the identity of the organization, is "boundaries." It is impossible, however, to adequately explain the significance and operation of boundaries without some discussion of the various intrapsychic and social mechanisms which bring them into importance. In this we do not pretend to give an overall account of psychoanalysis, but only an introduction to a few important components. Moreover, although knowledge of the whole field is useful to the organizational analyst, individual therapy is not his business, and his emphases in selecting among psychoanalytic concepts and methods are accordingly different from those of the therapist. We shall present psychoanalytic theory here with three foci. First, we shall consider the development of the individual's psychological structure and the meaning of ego. This provides the foundation for our understanding of the organizational identity of the individual. Next we shall take up the emotional and psychical life of groups, emphasizing small groups with direct (especially face-to-face) communication. A large part of the life of organizations involves action in groups, while much theory and many accountability implementations have focused exclusively on the individual.

Individuation, Object Relations and Ego: At the outset of life the child is completely dependent on others for the fulfillment of

most of his needs. Although his ability to depend and the range of those on whom he may depend vary, the child's parents are normally the source of gratification of the desires which spring from needs. These needs start from such elemental ones as food and warmth and move to more complex derivatives. Since the child must depend on others for the gratification of even these physical needs, the needs may be considered social at the start. Of course, the child also has directly social needs, for companionship and nurturance, though these are not at the same elementary level.

At first the child is unable to differentiate between his own desires and the external sources of their gratification.[7] More accurately perhaps, the desire manifests itself immediately as an image of the source of its gratification--say the mother's breast. One of the first major steps in childhood development is learning to differentiate between such an image and the real external object. In the course of achieving such differentiation, the child may come to see two breasts--one good, and there when he needs it, and one bad, and depriving in its absence. This is the first appearance of the basic defense mechanism called splitting. Unable to recognize the unity of good and bad object, the child splits the one off from the other. This is also the source of evaluative judgments--the egotistical distinction between gratification and deprivation. Later, as the child learns guilt, he comes to elaborate this evaluative framework with the rudiments of morality. But, at the start, the child's crucial developmental problems concern establishing an ability to manage boundaries between himself and the outside world. Adequately making this distinction is the beginning of ego-development. But, this

development never takes place without leaving the permanent residues of early splitting and identifications.

Identifications are crucial. The child--and indeed the adult--operates with two modes of unconscious transaction across the boundary of the self: introjection and projection.[8] Introjection involves the treatment of something from the external world as a part of the self. Projection involves identifying something in the outside world on the basis of an internal object. The child may internalize a construction (or set of images) of a parent which seems to have a life of its own. It can form, thus, a distinct component of the child's conception of himself. Conversely, the child may project his own motives onto the action of another or even onto a physical event. Thus, a child with hostility toward another may look upon a misfortune suffered by that other as though he had caused it. Thought, in this sense, is omnipotent for the child. Projective identification is always at base the way in which a person sees the external world. He categorizes the objects with which it presents him on the basis of his prior experience. To be sure, in the ordinary adult this is a highly sophisticated process, and as long as it does not change cultural context too radically, his identifications are reasonably accurate. But even the term 'accurate' can be misleading, however, if it suggests that there is a simple measure of such identifications' accuracy. There is not. Every projective identification includes, as a component of greater or lesser importance, some sort of evaluative judgment: Is this object good, bad, useful, how, etc.? An individual's earliest social experiences form the most fundamental foundation of all his later projective

identifications. The way in which the individual views the organization around him and his fellow members, thus, is influenced in some part by his early social experiences.

Now, early social experience does not provide for a highly sophisticated set of projective categories. Basic mental images of people and things tend to be very crude and stereotyped. They represent simply good and evil, nurturing and depriving, etc. They are almost always seen to occur in pairs of opposites, and thus to reval profound ambivalences. One of the primary tasks of the child as he grows up, and of the patient is psychoanalysis, is to overcome the splitting of these pairs of opposites. The individual must come to see people as made up of complex interrelationships of traits.[9] Thus, the child learns that the mother who feeds him and the mother who is not immediately available at the moment when he is hungry are the same person, not two separate mothers. At higher levels of mental functioning, the identifications become less crude and more specific, but they never lose their ties with their infantile basis, as we have indicated. Rather there is a sort of inverted pyramid formed as the complexities of recent content are built upon the more grossly defined categories of earlier experience.

Emotional predilections are always focused at the lower levels of this inverted pyramid, however. The strongest effect of any individual is structured in the broad categories determined by early experience. In this way early experience remains of considerable importance into adulthood for even the best adjusted of individuals. The expression of this affective infrastructure is not always direct, however. Individuals are apt to keep painful (or potentially disruptive) memories from

their current consciousness. This repression results in a lopsided mental functioning characterized by the over-determination of actions and reactions. Over-determination occurs when some act is produced not only by its manifest motivation but also by some unconscious cause. In other words, acts consciously unexceptionable are used to express repressed thought or emotional material. Repression amounts to a narrowing of the base of the inverted pyramid we imagined. In other words, each repressed element narrows the range of mental expression and activity open to the individual.[10] While some selection among the many possible modes and content areas of psychical expression must take place, massive repression can become extremely constricting of the individual personality.[11]

Repression is only the most basic of the many mechanisms of defense through which the individual ego strives to protect itself from having its balance upset. This balance is central to the nature of ego: the function of the latter is the maintenance of the former. A threat to the balance may come from somatic sources--such as a metabolic or chemical change, from intrapsychical sources--such as the reawakening of a conflicted mode of operation during a period of stress, or from environmental sources--such as a drastic change of social environment. Any such threat to the balance of the individuals functioning is met by either the invocation of an old or the elaboration of a new defense mechanism. Newer defense mechanisms tend to be quite specific to that to which they are a response. Earlier ones are more primitive and broad in scope. They tend to be invoked only as more sophisticated ones fail. This process is called regression. It is simply the course by which mental life moves back to a repetition of its earliest patterns.

In the last few paragraphs we have introduced--rather superficially --the key terms and concepts of the psychoanalytic approach on which our work is based. Both the theory itself and its relevance to the present study may become somewhat clearer if we examine two questions in somewhat greater detail. First, we shall inquire into the nature of transference, the key theoretical concept underpinning the practice of psychoanalysis and one with an obvious and close relationship to the consultative relationship. The second question, which immediately brings us to the discussion of groups, concerns the dynamics of dependence and independence among individuals. Aside from whatever explanatory value this focus may have, it allows for a treatment of at least one problem in greater detail, and this will give a better picture of the nature of relevant psychoanalytic theory than any overview which could fit the confines of this report.

As Arlow has observed:

> With a few crucial changes [transference] may be transformed into a definition of neurotic process--that is, the neurotic process may be viewed as a distortion of realistic object-relations, integration, and adaptation by additions or intrusions from past unconscious and repressed object-relations. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that every new development in psychoanalysis has some influence on the role of transference. (reported in Valenstein, 1974, p. 311)

Any discussion of transference thus will deal with the core of psychoanalysis. It will also provide some sense of the complexity of concepts which in general we must oversimplify in order to deal with them briefly. Even in this discussion, however, it must be remembered that we are not primarily concerned to write an essay in psychoanalysis, but to apply some of its relevant concepts and elements of approach to the study of organizations.

In classical analytic technique, considerable emphasis is placed on the 'fundamental rule' (Freud, 1911, 1912) that the patient report everything that comes into his head during the analytic hour, without criticism or censorship. This is supplemented by the interpretations of dreams and, occasionally, of material from outside the analytic hour. Interpretations are made only rarely while the patient continues to associate freely. More generally they are made when an interruption in the course of association (or other violation of the fundamental rule) reveals a blockage. The course of analysis is thus the gradual interpretation and elimination of maladaptive defenses causing a regression on the part of the patient into dealing with ever more fundamental material directly. It is precisely the weakening of the patient's ego controls in analysis that is seen as enabling its basic work to be done. Its basic work involves 'reunifying' the patient's past and present, that is, bringing the early determinations of his present behavior into his current awareness and thus enabling more appropriate current control over his actions, and more appropriate current affective life. A major tool of this process is 'remembering' or 'recollecting,' which, it should be remembered, has a special meaning for Freud (see 1914). It refers not to an intellectual process alone, but to a realization and reconnection of past events in the intellectualized setting of the analysis. The task of the analyst is to help the patient go beyond the compulsion to repeat to a greater understanding of what, at base, he is repeating.

In Kleinian analysis, Freud's fundamental rule is not foregone, but the rejection of one of Freud's secondary rules radically alters the impact of the first. This 'secondary rule' was the early suggestion that:

> So long as the patient's communications and ideas run on without any obstruction the theme of transference should be left untouched. One must wait until the transference, which is the most delicate of all procedures, has become a resistance. (Freud, 1913, p. 139)

This assumes that transference only reveals itself importantly as a break in the flow rather than a distortion of affect. But transference is much more just a threat to the continuation of treatment, as Freud acknowledged about a year later:

> Provided only that the patient shows compliance enough to respect the necessary conditions of the analysis, we regularly succeed in giving all the symptoms of his illness a new transference meaning and in replacing his ordinary neurosis by a 'tranference-neurosis' of which he can be cured by therapeutic work. (Freud, 1914, p. 154)

The gist of this is that the patient's unconscious affect becomes focused--in all of its irrationality, conflicts and contradictions--on the analyst. The immediate source of the transference is the authority of the doctor.[12] In most varieties of psychoanalytic treatment, this is enhanced and focused by the neutral presentation of self which the analyst adopts.[13] This makes it explicit that the patient is <u>projecting</u>, not responding to the reality of the psychoanalyst.[14]

A compulsion to repeat early psycho-social situations is the underlying factor producing the transference. The modern shcool of 'ego-analysts' tend to regard this as largely limited to the analytic situation and even there in need of development. Kleinian analysts, on the other hand, suggest that transference is both immediate and universal, though, of course, it varies in intensity and primitiveness. At some points in his work Freud seemed to tend toward this view:

> It is not a fact that transference emerges with greater intensity and lack of restraint during psycho-analysis than outside it.... These characteristics of transference are therefore to be attributed not to psychoanalysis but to neurosis itself. (Freud, 1912, p. 101)

It is the fact that transference is not limited to the strictly analytic situation which makes it important to our analysis. Transference takes place continually in various forms in all facets of organizational life. Group leaders are invested with attributes reflecting members' primitive relations with parents more than current reality. Heads of departments and entire organizations are seen as parents--either punitive or protective (or both) of their 'children.' Perhaps most similar to the analytic transference is the relationship of consultant to organization. He, like an analyst, is an ambiguous outsider who is brought into the field of one's life in order to change it. Like the psychoanalyst as well, the organizational consultant (or analyst) is likely to continually remind his client that understanding must be the immediate goal toward which they work; cure is the intended result of understanding, but is not to be sought without it. The means to this cure is seen as interpretation of the transference, in making it conscious.[15]

In ego-analytic theory the interpretation of the transference is limited to a part of the behavior of the patient during the analytic hour; in the Kleinian and object-relations approach virtually all behavior is subject to transference interpretation. The reason for this, on a theoretical level, stems from Klein's primary focus on the very earliest and most primitive of infantile object-relations.

> I hold that transference originates in the same processes which in the earliest stages determine object-relations. (Klein, 1952, p. 436)

Transference is seen as a very generalized phenomenon which "is a constant reality which begins even before the first interview" (Racker, 1968, p. 56). Thus, the transference is not particularized to the patient's relationship with the analyst, but is the universal outgrowth of infantile object-relations.[16]

> The differences between transference and the first object-relations...are a measure of the curative effect of the analytic procedure (Klein, 1952, 438)

Clearly this is close to the goal of a behaviorally oriented accountability system--to have the transactions between the various members of the school system follow conscious choices rather than unconscious habits or needs.

One of the key assumptions of the Kleinian perspective is that the patient will bring forward his most pressing underlying concerns either directly with a preoccupation in their area, or covertly with a metaphorical preoccupation. This is why Kleinians follow a rule of interpreting the area of greatest unconscious anxiety (cf. Segal, 1967, p. 202). Patients' defensive structures are seen as being called into play in such a way as to reveal their underlying significance in primal object relations.[17] This does not mean, however, that in rendering deep interpretations Kleinians ignore intermediate levels:

> In keeping with my subject matter, I have predominantly discussed here the earliest experiences, situations, and emotions from which transference springs. On these foundations, however, are built the later object-relations and the emotional and intellectual developments which necessitate the analyst's attention no less than the earliest ones; that is to say, our field of investigation covers <u>all</u> that lies between the current situation and the earliest experiences. In fact it is not possible to find access to earliest emotions and object-relations except by examining their vicissitudes in the light of later developments. (Klein, 1952, p. 437)

The goal of the analysis is to bring past and present together in the patient's mind. No individual--or organization--can go on effectively denying its past. If it does so, it loses its flexibility in dealing with new situations.

The main point of this exposition of Kleinian theory is to emphasize that the crucial issues of the individual's internal life are the same as those which dominate his current object-relations. His internal life is played out in his external life. This has two results: first, it means that one can not understand an individual's interpersonal behavior--even in highly role structured situations--without understanding his internal organization. Secondly, and fortunately for the ability to understand organizations at all, it means that the behavior of the individual displays the relevant factors of his internal organization, at least to an extent. In addition, the most important of these factors are not highly idiosyncratic, but are very similar from one individual to the next within a few basic orientations. The role structure of the organization is a means of reducing the tendency of the individual to externalize his internal conflicts directly. As such it tends to contain or absorb the anxiety produced by these conflicts.[18] Such conflicts are crucially conflicts of boundaries, since they concern the individual's ability to relate to his environment.[19]

The great virtue of organizations from the individual psychological point of view is that they provide a stable context for boundary maintenance. They reduce the number of issues which arise requiring individual action. If the individual faces a completely unorganized world, he would be unable to function, for he would be overwhelmed by

conflicting drives, environmental stimuli, and the need to act on numerous problems at once. When organizational boundaries break down, hostility is released. Thus, the psychology of the individual is dependent on his social circumstances. One cannot fruitfully speak of the isolated individual as a unit of analysis. Where a person is not involved in current realistic object-relations, he is involved in remembered or fantasized ones. While the person is always (obviously) the unit of imagination, perception, etc., it is not always equally valid to term the person an individual. At some points the person may indeed be very much divided against himself. His actions are by no means always consistent over time.[20] Further, he, by no means, always appears to himself and others as the locus of action. Frequently, the locus is a group. Group life brings to a focus the object-relations dilemmas of the individual: he must fight to keep his identity, and yet if he does not merge at all, he is not part of the group. This forms the subject of the remainder of the chapter.

Psychosocial Relations in Groups: The fundamental breakthroughs in the psychoanalytic study of groups came in England during World War II, primarily with the work of Wilfred Bion at the Tavistock Institute. A good way to explain Bion's approach is to begin with one of the crucial original cases in which it was developed.[21] We shall then describe later advances, most of which have to do with conceptual sophistication rather than fundamental ideas.

Our example concerns Bion's experiences when he was assigned to be the Director of the Training Wing of a wartime military psychiatric hospital. One of the first things that confronted him was the way in which groups and individuals made extraordinary demands on leaders.

At first, problems presented themselves in the form of hundreds of small requests from patients and staff, each expressed as though it were urgent. Thus the NCO's would ask for explanation of duties; someone would ask for leave, staff would demand Bion's attention to resolve misunderstandings, and so forth. The pressure of these duties took up most of Bion's time, and contributed to an atmosphere of tension and chaos in the ward. His first conclusion was that the situation resulted simply from a lack of discipline--a decision with which many an administrator in a similar situation will have sympathy. Dealing with this matter of discipline, Bion thought, was a distraction from his primary goal. But this turned out not to be the case.

The goal which Bion set himself when he took command followed on this basic premise:

> In the treatment of the individual, neurosis is displayed as a problem of the individual. In the treatment of a group it must be displayed as a problem of the group. (Bion and Rickman, 1961, p. 11)

In fact, the myriad of seemingly individual problems which distracted (he thought) Bion from his administrative duties could be seen as collective problems, problems of the group. This involved a certain amount of reconceptualization. Bion's first step in this direction came when he looked to the military to find what factors promoted 'good group spirit.' Now, all of the men under his care came from the military, and had already had the benefit of regular care, good food, discipline and so forth with their regular units. Clearly this had not stopped them from finding their way into the psychiatric hospital, and so clearly it must not be to such factors that Bion looked for his solution. The kind of discipline which Bion needed would have to work for

a hospital, in which all members of the group were such 'problem cases.' He, therefore, decided that his problem was equivalent to that of the commander of a rather 'scallywag' battalion in a theatre of war, that is, not on the back lines where all is calm.[22] By means of this analogy, Bion came up with a working hypothesis:

> the discipline required depends on two factors. (1) the presence of the enemy, who provided a common danger and a common aim; and (2) the presence of an officer who, being experienced, knows some of his own failings, respects the integrity of his men, and is not afraid of either their good-will or their hostility. (Bion and Rickman, 1961, pp. 12-13)

In other words, good discipline, or good group spirit, depends on having an identity as a group and a task--both of which are provided the military front lines by the presence of the enemy--and on having a good leader. Both factors are necessary.

Relatedly, studies of the American soldier during World War II showed the extraordinary extent of his dependence on what has been called the 'primary group.' Soldiers who experienced severe breakdowns, attacks of panic, etc. tended very strongly to come from units which had broken down internally as groups. The small group seemed to be the main support for the psychological state of the men.[23]

In the case of Bion's training wing, the common danger was the existence of neurosis as a disability of the community. This, in essence, was Bion's original problems--to see collective problems as such--but how was the group to be persuaded to tackle neurotic problems as a collective or communal issue? Certainly, not just by telling it to do so. One of the problems which any group leader who wishes to effect changes in the structure of his group's life must face is

the fact that groups have great inertia. They have considerable investment in remaining as they are, even if this means maintaining their problems. As Bion noted, this process has often been observed in the case of individuals:

> The neurotic patient does not always want treatment, and when at last his distress drives him to it he does not want it wholeheartedly. This reluctance has been recognized in the discussion of resistance and allied phenomena; but the existence of comparable phenomena in societies has not been recognized. (Bion and Rickman, 1961, p. 14)24

The means of overcoming this resistance is to show to the community that various of its communal problems (a) exist, and (b) are neurotic by-products. Then, neurosis itself may seem a subject worthy of community attention, study and attack.

We will not enumerate the various details of the way in which Bion contrived to bring neurosis to the fore of collective consciousness as a collective problem. The gist of it all is this: He required that all men on the ward be engaged in a number of organized, straightforward productive activities. He also provided for one occasion daily on which the men (a) assembled together as a group, and (b) viewed their collective activities, their collective products as objectively as possible. In other words, there was some organization of which they could be <u>inside</u>, and there was an occasion for them to be <u>outside</u> observers.[25] Administrative actions and/or psychological interpretations took place during the daily assembly, when the men were set to view their activities as 'outsiders.'

This last means that these directions and comments were addressed to the group's faculty for objectivity, observing, regulation. In

effect, they were addressed to the group's ego. Now, instead of continuing with this example, it seems more helpful to say something about what we mean by the group's 'ego,' and how this relates to its capacity for effective operations and management. We will add this on Bion's experiment: it proved highly successful in running the ward, eventually bringing its author to this conclusion:

> The whole concept of the 'occupation' of the training wing as a study of, and a training in, the management of interpersonal relationships within a group seemed to be amply justified as a therapeutic approach. (Bion and Rickman, 1961, pp. 21-22)

We indicated, eventually Bion was brought to this conclusion. This is an important qualification. The experiment did not and could not have an instant curative effect. Rather, there was an intermediate process required. This is interpretation and working through, always a fairly lengthy matter when it deals with deep-seated issues. There is no short way out in group work, no patent-medicine cure. A leader must focus the group's attention on self-observation over a long period, and with as much attention to the boring times as to the exciting ones.

Let us return to the issue of group 'ego' and related notions.[26] When Freud introduced the notion of ego, he did it using the German word 'ich,' which is the equivalent to 'me' or 'I' in English. He preferred not to use the classical terms which give the illusion of some separate entity in the individuals. Many analysts such as Sullivan have followed him in this, but ego is the more commonly used term today. When we refer to the ego, then, it is useful to remember that we are referring to the sense of self, or, more accurately the ability to maintain a sense of self.[27] One of the most important psychological

distinctions (as we discussed above) is simply that between inside and outside. This amounts to distinction between what is a part of one and what is not. This implies a boundary, and this boundary constitutes what we call self. But it is not only an outside limit, a statement of where 'I' ends; but it is the point of contact between two regions: the individual or group and its environment.

The ego develops in the child's life as the ability to distinguish between objects and images which are inside and outside. It is, in essence, the boundary function. When we are talking about the ego, then, the first thing to remember is that we are talking about identity, the identity of the individual or group whose ego we are considering, in the context of its larger environment. How this environment is structured becomes an important variable to take into account.[28] Thus, the environment of a group may help to reinforce its ego function of maintaining identity--as in the example of a military group faced with an enemy. Or, it may make it difficult to maintain identity; if for example, the environment refuses to treat the group as such. A non-recognized union would be such a case. It is difficult for a union to maintain its members' loyalty if the organization persists in treating them solely as individuals.

There is another aspect to ego functioning, however, related to this. Since the ego is the ability to maintain identity, to maintain control over boundaries, it represents a more advanced state of development than various undifferentiated ways of functioning. It is the ego which keeps the individual from regressing into undifferentiated infantile modes of functioning (as discussed above).[29] In the case of groups as well, there are more primitive states of functioning.[30]

These are what Bion calls the 'basic assumption' states. We shall go into them in some detail below. First, let us develop our consideration of individual and group identities, with special attention to the role of the organizations as a context for such identities.

The child generally develops his identity in relation to a number of key persons: usually his mother, father and siblings. These persons constitute his first--and always highly important--reference group. His ego is largely at first a sense of himself as a member of that group, especially in relation to his mother while he is yet an infant. In respect to this group (as especially as distinct from all other later ones), an important factor is the extent of congruency and interlocking of members. In other words, it is important how much the individual's relations with any one member of group imply and/or fit with his relations with others. If his relationships are not congruent, they will pull him in different directions as they make conflicting demands upon him.[31] This will make it difficult for him to form a stable identity for his most important 'leaders.' Each expects him to follow their rules, but the two sets of rules do not match. A certain amount of incongruency is inevitable wherever there are two parents.[32] It reaches extremes only in cases where the two parents diverge radically--as in many instances of divorced couples, or indeed, those who stay together and fight. Sometimes--and this is most difficult of all for the child to deal with--one parent will give internally conflicting and irreconcilable cues or demands. This was found to be the case in Bateson et al.'s study of schizophrenogenic mothers, and they named it the double bind syndrome (1956). A simple example is a mother who is afraid of her affections for her child, and of the child's

dependence of her, but who also wants to conform to society's and her own model of a good mother. She is liable to encourage the child to act affectionately toward her, thus fulfilling the norm. When the child does so, however, she will become frightened of the extent to which it depends on her (she may well sense her own inadequacy) and will repulse the child. The child in effect experiences two mothers and can never act to please them both.

Situations of this sort have their most dramatic impacts when experienced in early childhood, but they have definite analogues later in life. Thus in organizations, for example, we are aware of how important it is for leaders to be consistent in their commands. Nonetheless, not all leaders are consistent, and often people are subject to multiple authority and conflicting directions. Teachers, for example, may get different ones from principals and department chairmen. It is always difficult to reconcile such conflicts, but how well a teacher does so may depend on the larger characteristics of the organization, and on his or her own past experiences of such 'double-binds.' And what is true of individuals in this respect is also true of groups, with the exception that groups can in fact split down the middle and go in two directions, which individuals cannot do. Even groups are limited in this capacity, however, by the fact that they are often functionally constituted in an organization in such a way that they must work together--or at least be accountable together for some 'product.' It is interesting (though fortunate) that not one accountability system we discovered in the literature or the field took the consistency of organizational leadership as one of the variables in its 'account.' Neither did any take such a variable into account as one of the

environmental variables distinguishing teachers' situations for comparison on effectiveness measures. Yet this may very much influence the ability of teachers to perform effectively.

Even where groups can split in two, this may not always solve the problem. Many strains cannot be removed by splitting. Thus a group may contain two leaders of different purposes: one, say, a finance chairman and the other a policy chairman. Each is likely to acquire a certain amount of generalized authority, and to impinge on the other's special areas, or to compete for control of those issues not clearly belonging to one or the other. Such a problem may result simply in one becoming the overall leader, but as long as there must be a division of labor, there will be points at which both have power. Since groups generally identify themselves in terms of their leaders--at least behaviorally--such a situation can make for a leadership crisis.

Problems such as the above, however, only point to a deeper underlying characteristic of life in groups. This is the fact that people have identities both as individuals and as members of groups. Further, they may be members of more than one group. Just to take the former point, we can see that there is conflict between the individual egos of group members and collective ego of the group. In order to participate in groups, individuals must sacrifice a certain amount of their independent identity and share a common identity with the others. Since their individual identity is a matter of their ego, however, this means that they must <u>regress</u>. That is, they must give up a certain amount of their ego control as individuals and return to an earlier less differentiated state. This means that as members of groups, people will be less able to make sophisticated distinctions

and will be more subject to various emotions and drives. They will also be more similar than their often highly heterogenous outside identities would lead one to believe. But this is an essential part of 'being in touch with a group.' If this regression does not to some extent take place, the group remains a mere collection of individuals and is unable to achieve any sense of solidarity or community. It has no reason to act as a unit.

Let us follow this up by exploring the implications of a key passage of Bion's. He says:

> I hope to show that in his contact with the complexities of life in a group the adult resorts, in what may be a massive regression, to mechanisms described by Melanie Klein (1931, 1946) as typical of the earliest phases of mental life. The adult must establish contact with the emotional life of the group in which he lives; this task would appear to be as formidable to the adult as the relationship with the breasts appears to be to the infant, and the failure to meet the demands of this task is revealed in his regression. The belief that a group exists, as distinct from an aggregate of individuals, is an essential part of this regression, as are also the characteristics with which the supposed group is endowed by the individual. Substance is given to the phantasy that the group exists by the fact that the regression involves the individual in a loss of his 'individual distinctivenss' (Freud, 1921, p. 9), indistinguishable from depersonalization, and therefore obscures observation that the aggregation is of individuals. It follows that if the observer judges a group to be in existence, the individuals composing it must have experienced this regression. (Bion, 1961b, pp. 141-142)

Let us identify the four main propositions or statements in a logical progression in this passage. We have already noted what regression means in this context: a moving backward on the path of psychical development. Thus the individual's most recent adaptations (which Bion, following Freud, assumes to be 'higher' and more sophisticated) give way to earlier ones. As a person's defenses prove inadequate to his

circumstances, he resorts to earlier and less differentiated ones. Since the individual's earlier circumstances are more governed by universal laws and patterns of development than his later ones, the defense mechanisms associated with his early life are less distinctly his, and are of more common types. At the same time they are more general. That is, they take defense against a wide range of threats; they are not specialized, as are the defense mechanisms of later formulation. This is what is implied when Bion indicates that regression involves a loss of individual distinctiveness.

Now, his propositions:

1. It is necessary for the individual to be emotionally integrated into the primary group in which he lives

But,

2. This is difficult, a formidable task comparable to that the infant faces in relating to a mother who seems sometimes nurturing and sometimes depriving.

3. Faced with failure to establish contact with his primary group emotionally, the individual will resort more and more to regression.

4. It is regression in common which allows for individuals to reconstitute themselves as a group.

Therefore,

5. Group life implies regression. A group is an aggregate of individuals all in the same state of regression.

It should be mentioned, á propos of the last statement, that this refers to a psychological group, an emotional group. We are only concerned here with groups which have some kind of emotional cohesiveness, which have a psychological group life. But it should be remembered as well, that this indicates in some degree almost all active groups, almost all bounded sets of requently interacting people, especially if they share

a common responsibility. It is very difficult to keep a set of people together without their forming a psychological group.

One function of the regression which is the nature of group life is to make the individual members much more susceptible to leadership than they would be outside it. This is because by becoming a member of the group the individual has, as we have indicated, given up unconsciously some of his own ability to control his actions. Because the defense mechanisms which form his personal ego within the group are very general, they can be turned in a number of different directions. It is as though a part of his 'character armour'[33] has been removed. It is much easier for outside influences to reach him because he has already had to let down his defenses to be in the group.

A primary group, as we have used the term, refers only to any group for which the individuals concerned have made the decision to remain members whatever (inasmuch as they can conceive) may happen, rather than withdraw. Some groups are thus more primary than others. That is, it would take a great deal to make the individual alter his (often unconscious) decision to remain a member in such cases. Some, such as the family, are inevitably primary--no matter how much one may wish to, one can never fully withdraw his or her emotions from their roots in the family, that is, in the circumstances of one's own psychical development. From later groups attachments one can remain relatively aloof and still be a member. It is in this sense that March and Simon (see above) suggest that the only personal decision the individual makes vis-á-vis the organization is whether or not to be a member. Perhaps, however, this is an oversimplification.

Regression is not in any sense 'total' when individuals enter groups. In fact, the ability to be an active member of a group does depend on a certain extent of individual development. A person who was perennially overwhelmed by interpersonal situations could not cope with the group environment; one too rigidly locked into his defenses could not respond to it. What we are saying, rather, is that the group's solidarity is founded not only on its rational purpose or on some calculation of personal advantage which its members make. Its solidarity is founded crucially on a shared set of emotions. In Bion's terms, there is a 'work-group,' which proceeds with the tasks, and there are 'basic-assumption groups' which constitute a sub-stratum to the collectivity:

> Work-group activity is obstructed, diverted, and on occasion assisted by certain other mental activities that have in common the attribute of powerful emotional drives. These activities, at first sight chaotic, are given a certain cohesion if it is assumed that they spring from basic assumptions common to all the group. (Bion, 1961b, p. 146)

It is with the relationship between these two levels that anyone who wishes to lead a group is concerned--whether he be administrator or outside change agent or group psychotherapist.[34]

Bion distinguishes three types of basic-assumption groups: the fight/flight group, in which members struggle to maintain discrete identities and avoid dealing constructively with underlying group issues; dependent groups, in which the group looks for an authority to lead it, whether from an officially sanctioned source (such as a psychoanalyst) or from one of its members; and the pairing group, in which binary relationships (of at least underlying and often overt sexual nature) come to the fore and are the focus of the group's attention.

Paradoxically, in the last case the equality of members often becomes the focus of the group's attention. Where there is a leader, all members expect to be treated equally by him or her; where there is not, an idealization of the group itself, as an abstraction, often takes the place of the leader. In all cases, when one theme or basic-assumption is dominant, the others retain their importance, but covertly. This is because none of them is adequate as a defense against the threatening aspects of group life, nor does any of them state a full situation.[35]

Rather than themselves being fundamental, the expressions of primary material, they are reactions against (and thus expressions of) some deeper, more fundamental state. This is the state of complete lack of differentiating ability: the primal experiences of the foetus and neonate and one of the deepest unconscious fears of us all. These experiences of infancy were dominated by part objects, unreal introjections of single aspects of objects. Thus, basic-assumption states are recourses of the group to emotions which have some coherence, show some ego control. The very earliest experience of part-objects is an experience of complete helplessness and inability to organize the many stimuli presented by the environment. This state is the equivalent of very deep psychotic anxieties--although it may sometimes be briefly seen in relatively stable groups. We should not however think that this helplessness is a totally irrational perception. It is in a sense of fact of life with which we must all deal. As Freud commented:

> When a human being has himself grown up, he knows, to be sure, that he is in possession of greater strength, but his insight into the perils of life has also grown greater, and he rightly concludes that fundamentally he remains just as helpless and unprotected as he was in his childhood, that faced by thw world he is still a child. Even now, therefore, he cannot do without the

> the protection which he enjoyed as a child. But he has long since recognized, too, that his father is a being of narrowly restricted power, and not equipped with every excellence. (Freud, 1933, p. 163)

In this passage Freud is describing what he sees as a part of the process of development of a belief in god, based on the earlier more undifferentiated and overvalued faith which the child had in its father. However, as Bion, Slater and others have pointed out, such faith can be applied to deify almost anyone and anything. Most especially, group leaders are likely to be deified, the more so if they consist of "those archetypcal autocrats, the doctor or the teacher" (Slater, 1966, pp. 7-8). Paradoxically, the ability of a group to deify its leader depends on its not having a realistic assessment of him. This means that a distant, ambivalent, or indistinct leader is often the most likely to be deified. The deification springs from the group--the leader need do nothing but sit there.

Such deification is, according to Slater, a part of the process of moving through the basic-assumption states in the course of group development. Before we consider Slater's perspective on groups as a microcosm of social change, however, let us look at Bion's analysis of the 'basic-assumption groups' (as he terms the group as dominated by the various basic assumptions).[36] In the fight/flight group, no leader will be recognized who does not afford an opportunity for flight or aggression. If a leader counsels caution and rational consideration of an issue, the group will grow impatient and switch to another leader. In the dependent group, a leader is sought who can produce the magic--as opposed to hard work--which the group desires. The leader is thus treated either with worshipful attention--and the refusal to do any

work oneself or with silence. The latter is a sort of conspiracy to deprive the leader of the material he needs in order to act 'scientific' --an attitude the group does not want him to take. The pairing group enjoys present feelings about which it may be guilty, and so appeals to a future outcome which it regards as morally unexceptionable-- a birth. This is glorified and generalized so that the group seems always to be waiting for its leader, who is yet unborn. In each case the group can be seen to be avoiding the issue, though each in a different way. The issue, of course, is the immediate internal nature of the group--not the outside threats seen by the fight/flight group, not the magical influences or 'prescriptions' from the doctor desired by the dependent group, not the glorifed but unachievable future which preoccupies the pairing group.

The group which deals in a practical way with the here and now is the work-group. "In a therapeutic group the analyst is the work-group leader." (Bion, 1961b, pp. 152-153). That is, he refuses to participate in the avoidances and fantasies of the members and attempts to get them to work on the task of understanding themselves as members of a group. The efforts of the work-group in general, and the emotional backing which the leader can receive in particular, depend on the basic assumptions. The leader's position vis-á-vis the group will fluctuate according to which basic assumption is dominant and the extent to which the group sees the leader as fitting in with what is required in these different states of mind. What is required of a therapeutic leader is that he interpret these different activities and emotional states to the group. What is needed of an administrative leader is that he not get caught up in these irrationalities, but be

able to recognize them when they arise and know the difficulties which they will pose. Perhaps the most difficult of these is the tendency of dependent groups to overtly accept what a leader says, but not to consistently follow what he suggests. It is always difficult to remember that this acceptance may not be genuine, or even, if it is genuine, may not be complete. It may be the acceptance only of one of the basic assumption states and thus not enough to motivate the unified work-group to action.

Each basic-assumption state attempts to maintain itself as it is, resisting not only any hard work, but any suggestion that there should be a change. In a therapeutic group this is plainly contradictory, since the members of the group are met precisely to seek change. Even in ordinary work-groups, however, basic-assumption states prevail to hold members to practices and patterns of relationship which may have been rationally shown to be impractical.[37] Failure to recognize this is a prime reason for the failure of accountability systems, predicated as they are on an assumption of universal rationality. The work-group as we have said, is the mature intellectual function of the group, to which the leader must appeal for validation of his suggestions and help in controlling boundaries or instituting changes designed to bring about new balance. Just as the individual needs to maintain a certain amount of control of his primary drives, so the work-group must maintain a certain control over the expression of basic-assumption states:

> If the specialized work-group cannot, or does not, cope with the basic-assumption phenomena that are its province, then the work-group functions of the main group are vitiated by the presence of these basic assumptions. As work-group function consists essentially of the translation of thoughts and feelings into behavior which is

> adapted to reality, it is ill-adapted to give expression to basic assumptions. For basic assumptions become dangerous in proportion as the attempt is made to translate them into action. (Bion, 1961b, p. 157)

Specialized groups, as the name implies, are those with a special tie to one or another of the basic-assumptions.

Slater suggests that groups tend, as they develop, to pass through a sequence of stages in which the various basic-assumption groups are dominant. This process does not always go through all of its possible steps--some groups even in therapeutic settings with attentive leaders become 'stalled' at one or another stage. In groups which do develop, however, the states are the normal course of this development. The situation begins with the 'merge' which members experience as they lose their senses of distinct boundaries vis-á-vis each other in a group. Their relations with each other tend to be unconscious in a degree which they otherwise seldom are. In this they may be affiliative or combative, but in neither case for reasons of which the members are aware. It is as though the group forced them into particular styles of relationship--because the sources of these styles are unconcious.[38] As Slater put it:

> An individual who enters a group for the first time tends to preceive it as an undifferentiated mass. He may pick one or two individuals for special attention, but this will perforce be on the basis of unconscious fantasies--of transference. Thus insofar as he is discriminating he distorts, and insofar as he is empirical he is vague. (Slater, 1966, p. 175)

This remains true of intragroup relations through both the fight/flight and dependency stages. The struggle for identity is out and out in the fight/flight stage; but the dependency stage, however, it

has become ambivalent. The identity issue tends to recur with renewed intensity at intervals. In Slater's words:

> the blurring of boundaries between oneself and the group tends to occur when the group member experiences sudden reinforcement by the group of feelings, impulses, and fantasies of which he is not fully conscious. At such a time he will feel swept away by forces that seem to come both from within and from without. (Slater, 1966, p. 179)

Fight and flight are mechanisms by which the individual attempts to avoid the unpleasant sensations, including depersonalization, which this induces. Fighting is a very basic way of emphasizing difference:

> It is like pinching onself to be sure one is not dreaming, except that the members pinch one another, saying, as it were, 'I hurt--therefore I am.' (Slater, 1966, op. cit.)

Flight demonstrates distinction by distance instead of by contradiction.

With the onset of the dependency attitude, the same issues are played out with somewhat greater sophistication and focus. Individuality seems to be at once acknowledged and denied, through an attempt at symbiotic union with the authority figure.[39] Piaget comments, in a related context:

> Egocentrism insofar as it means confusion of the ego and the external world, and egocentrism insofar as it means lack of cooperation, constitute one and the same phenomenon. So long as the child does not dissociate his ego from the suggestions coming from the physical and from the social world he cannot cooperate, for in order to cooperate one must be conscious of one's ego and situate it in relation to thought in general. And in order to become conscious of one's ego, it is necessary to liberate oneself from the thought and will of others. (Piaget, 1932, p. 87)

We have already discussed the role of projective identifications in both childhood development and in group life. In an ambiguous situation, an individual attempts to extend some, one or another of the categories he has internalized to account for circumstances at hand. In the group setting, one's fellow members and the group itself start out ambiguous in this way and are subject to the individuals' projections. The leader in a therapy group remains ambiguous precisely to bring out these projections. An organization has formal roles precisely to minimize the influence of such projection (though it can never be eradicated). In ordinary situations of leadership, such as those in schools, such projective mechanisms continually operate, though in less dramatic and more hidden forms than in therapy. The leader needs to be conscious of whether he fits well or poorly with the group's projection onto him.[40] The projections (in either case) may support or hinder effective organizational operation, and the leader may need to embark on some scheme of reeducation of group/organization members in order to bring the projections into the open.[41]

The relationship to the leader is central to the dynamics by which group development and reality-consciousness come about. This comes about through the development of dependency and revolt against it. This "most dramatic change" is made possible by:

> the leverage provided by having a common object for fantasy projection. The presence of an ambiguous authority figure allows the members to share a fantasy, and as they become increasingly engrossed in this sharing, they are gradually seduced into sharing a reality instead, and thereby freed realistically to confront one another. That is, in order to realize the enjoyment of a shared fantasy, they are led to invest it increasingly with group-relevant elements and decreasingly its personal-familial elements, until it becomes dangerously susceptible to disconfirmation. (Slater, 1966, pp. 172-173)

A revolt is the logical culmination of this process of replacing fantasy with reality. To be sure, not all groups ever manage to institute a revolt--some remain forever snipping at authority without 'getting it together' to attack.

> It is worth noting that a successful revolt usually involves a period in which the differences in members' attitudes toward the leader are brought forward. A group, in other words, cannot effectively revolt so long as it perceives itself as a mob or mass, but only when it can differentiate clearly among its members. (Slater, 1966, p. 176)

In this sense, the group is involved in trying to substitute conscious bonds for unconscious ones. The unconscious ones are always threatening members with being enveloped by the group. The conscious ones allow for cooperation. Thus it is by no means simply true that groups work together better the more they have emotions in common--as some group dynamics writers and practitioners seem to suggest. They also need some way to bring their emotional attachments under conscious management. An organization, however, cannot tolerate repeated revolts against leaders as a means of improving its practice. This is why Tavistock seminars, for example, encourage the expression of such revolt in a contained and non-practical situation.

Because, as we have indicated, the ability to influence the boundaries and actions of a group from within depends on being conscious of what these boundaries and the sources of action are, a revolt generally results

> in a total increase in power in the group. Defining power as the ability to influence, everyone, including the group leader, has more influence on everyone else. (Slater, 1966, p. 163, following Bennis)

This is so because the revolt itself brings about a considerable increase in conscious awareness of what is going on in the group. In addition, the revolt tends to free the group from the domination of many established patterns of interaction. There is greater flexibility in the role relations of members, in their attitudes toward authority. From the point of view of the leader, group members will act much more realistically in response to his comments. Instead of either treating them as sacred (and doing nothing about them) or contradicting them irrationally, the group may consider the leaders' interpretations rationally and take action accordingly.

This is coupled with a greater equality and freedom from hierarchy. Indeed, the freedom may produce an exaggerated emphasis on democracy among the group members, as they attempt to ensure that no one member of the group fills the deposed leader's shoes too soon. Later, of course, as group members proceed to assess each other realistically, group leaders do emerge based on useful personal characteristics such as perceptiveness. Following the revolt, group members are no longer placed in fear of either the unrestricted domination of the leader nor of their common emotionality with each other.[42] They have formed more rational bonds of cooperation with each other, at least for the time being. The post-revolt group is unstable as well, however, It is only one step on the group's progress toward a workable balance between emotionality and practicality or rationality:

> The danger of engulfment is less important because it is no longer the sole basis for unity. But the secularization of the group, the leader, and other members, while generating greater rationality, autonomy, and understanding, also raises the threat that perhaps there is no emotionally intense reason for being together at all. Thus the pairing group--although the most secular

> of the three types in most respects--attempts to reintroduce the sphere of the sacred in a non-interfering way, by placing it in the future and divesting it of all practical consequences save for an oversanguine mood and a certain passivity. (Slater, 1966, p. 182)

The pairing group thus tries to maximize both consciousness and involvement, while the fight/flight group represents the attempt to maintain a balance between individual and group identity under conditions of minimum consciousness and involvement.

The pairing group exists primarily in response to the desire of members to have a secure sense of the future. Its theme is procreation, reproduction. Differentiated relations among members which previously were taboo are now tolerated, and indeed prized as the source of this idealized productive power. The pairing group also results, however, from the apparently inherent instability of the equality which follows the revolt. There is a brittleness and tenseness to this equality, stemming in large part from its essentially negative nature. It is equality still vis-a-vis the deposed leader. It is thus in a sense only the obverse of the dependency group. It has, however, freed forces which have productive aspects in fact as well as in fantasy:

> At the time of the revolt (the equality or levelling stage) hostility is all funneled onto the leader, with intermember hostility prohibited. This continues for some time after the revolt, gradually giving way to the final stage, in which new criteria of differentiation emerge and hostility between members is open and tolerated. Since these criteria differ considerably from group to group, however, it is difficult to make any generalizations about this last stage. It is probably fair to say, however, that in many groups understanding and perceptiveness (now freed by the revolt from the stigma of either competition with or seeking favour from the leader) become important elements in the status structure of the group. (Slater, 1966, p. 159)

It will be observed that the effects of revolt in the group appear to be much the same whether the group is a small one convened for educational purposes or a large social group, or indeed, a society. There are, of course, greater complications in the last case, but not a fundamental difference of kind.

The two most obvious differences are a) the absence of face-to-face communication as the primary mode of interaction in the large collectivity and b) the frequently much greater formal organization of the large collectivity. Both of these are, in fact, quite important. Face-to-face communication is one of the characteristics which gives small groups their propensity to high levels of unconscious and emotional internal relations. It also means that all members have, at least physically, the same opportunities for communication with all others. In a large collectivity--formally organized or not--there are usually a number of small component groups and fairly regularized networks of communication. Although small groups may split, it is usually difficult for them to maintain this extent of internal differentiation. A large part of the effects of the face-to-face communications pattern may be summed up by saying that it predisposes members to informal rather than formal relations.

Much discussion of small groups--academic and non-academic alike--presents them by comparison to formal organization, and emphasizes the more 'personable' relations they contain, their greater freedom of emotional expression, and security of interpersonal relations. Formal organization is taken as the standard, and informal organization in small groups treated as the deviation. The psychoanalytic perspective

which we have outlined above gives us a somewhat different view. A clue to this may be found in our care to emphasize the basic nature of the family as a small group of primal importance. The individual is not born either into total isolation nor into an elaborate formal organization. The bulk of the patterning of his life, which is significant to him, occurs at first implicitly, no one having made explicit the relevant personality and behavioral traits of his parents and siblings. Thus both unconscious factors and small groups seem to merit a certain primacy of attention, rather than treatment as residual categories.[43] In this perspective we come not only to a greater understanding of small groups, but also an important new perspective on organization as such. Organization has generally been treated in textbooks in terms of its utilitarian values or practical necessity: men organized themselves in order to get something done. And so, presumably they did, and certainly still do. But this is by no means the only reason for forming organizations, even though it may be the most explicit.

Organizations are created, and more importantly maintained, because of the stability of identity which they afford individuals and groups, and because of their effectiveness in managing boundary transactions. Beginning with the basic self/other distinction and ramifying into a welter of complexities, the individual's experience of the world is largely one of boundaries. On the one hand, the individual finds himself especially, in modern societies, a participant in a wide range of different social situations. Each of these involves a different aspect of his personality, skills and resources. In order to manage these many different statuses, organization produces relatively

explicit or formalized roles. These are normative patterns of behavior which the individual is expected to fulfill (and usually not to exceed) in various situations in accord with his position or status. But of course he is one individual, however divided his many statuses vis-a-vis other social actors may be.[44] This means that he has a basic problem of maintaining a sense of personal unity despite his many varying social identities. Closely related to this is another basic dilemma of individual existence. There is an ultimately irresolvable conflict between the desire for incorporation and community and the desire for individuality and freedom. For different people at different times, one or the other of these two sides may predominate, but the submerged one never disappears. It stays below the surface, giving an added negative strength of avoidance to its counterpart. People thus accommodate to this conflict but do not eradicate it.

The hostilities which come from identity conflicts in small groups are by no means unique to them. On the contrary they are very basic and endemic to social life. Organization is one of the ways by which they are controlled, by which people achieve accommodation with the conflicts at their source. An organization cannot be understood fully without recognition that whatever its explicit purpose, it is also helping people to deal with this kind of boundary issue. Organizations provide routinized and other ritualized ways of moving from a position in one set of statuses to one in another. And, as the structure of boundaries of emotional identification for their members, they absorb much of hostility and intra-psychic conflicts which result from the conflict between social and individual life. To generalize using a colloquial term: a function of organization in society is to absorb

craziness. This craziness is not confined to those who are institutionalized in psychiatric hospitals; for the rest of us, institutions of a less specialized nature fulfill a similar function.

Organizations, we have suggested, have two functions: one an explicit task,[45] the other a generally unconscious maintenance of emotional boundaries. Any specific organization, thus, is characterized by two corresponding systems. Miller and Rice (1967) have termed these the task and sentient systems.[46] The sentient system is composed of the set of affective involvements and identifications in the organization and the means for managing emotional boundary transactions. Organization as it generally appears on formal charts, as it is the subject of technical planning, is part or all of the task system. This is therefore both conscious and oriented toward getting something in particular done, achieving some goal. This is the perspective taken most often by management theorists and organizational sociologists: organization is a tool designed for the more efficient performance of specific tasks. This is clearly the stance taken by formal management systems, including the accountability programs we have seen in practice. One is to understand and manage organizations in terms of their goals, the way they attempt to fulfill them, the efficacy of their technical and administrative tools. But as Miller and Rice point out, these writers and many administrators forget that organization is also the means of handling the emotional/affective needs of individuals acting in groups.

To the extent that one is only interested in the task of the organization, human needs for satisfaction and defense against anxiety are simply constraints on task performance. If one looks at the issue

from the other side, however, one realizes that organizations are necessary for these same reasons to human beings. The task of the administrator--and in a sense a task of everyone in the organization--is to try and make these human needs mesh with the task requirements. If they do not, the 'constraint' can become an all but insurmountable impediment. The systems which characterize the organization, in other words, always affect each other, but are by no means always congruent. An effective planning and management system would need to take the structuring of this congruence as one of its major objectives. Unfortunately, most accountability systems ignore one dimension of the organization. This vitiates their effectiveness in task programming.

Groups and organizations, with the help of good leadership, can come to manage their boundary and identity functions effectively. In this they develop an ability analogous to that the child achieves in building his ego-strength. Still, there are always boundary problems to be managed between the members as individuals and as parts of groups, among various groups at the same level and between small groups and the larger ones of which they are parts. The strong 'ego' implies the ability to cope, but not the absence of problems which require this ability.

> The internal world of a group is made up, then, first of the contributions of its members to its purpose and, second, of the feelings and attitudes the members develop about each other and about the group, both internally and in relation to its environment. At the level of task performance, members take part as rational, mature human beings; at the level of assumptions they make about each other and the group, they go into collusion with each other to support or hinder what they have met to do. The resulting pattern is one of co-operation and conflict between the members as individuals and between them and the group culture they produce. (Miller and Rice, 1967, p. 18)

The external environment of the group includes the other individuals, groups, organizations and material forces with which group members interact, invidually, or as members of the organization, or collectively.

Interrelationships between groups and individuals--between systems--are what the formal organization of collectivities attempts to manage. In a sense, this organization attempts to keep members specialized in their interrelationships, rather than letting them revert to primitive and generalized responses to others. Only through specialization and differentiation can a high degree of rationality be maintained in this context. The interrelationships in the organization remain matters of sentience, however--or else people would not have adequate motivation to participate in them. For this reason, statements of the task-efficiency of various patterns of organization need also to consider sentience-efficiency:

> We have tried to show that inadequate definition of task-system boundaries presents major difficulties in controlling sentient boundaries; and, conversely, that inadequate control of sentient boundaries can lead to the redefinition of tasks and of task systems. (Miller and Rice, 1967, p. 262)

Large organizations tend to institute some form or another of regulating system in order to a) manage intergroup relations and b) manage linkages between sentient and task organization. Such regulating systems are themselves further specializations, and usually create yet another set of boundaries within the organization. These in turn must also be managed. There is thus an infinite number of tasks requiring management at any one time. And there is only a finite amount of

leadership. The result of this is that there are always unintended consequences to even the best planned purposive actions within the organization.[47] The more task and sentient systems, conscious and unconscious systems can be made congruent, however, the more the organization can be made to 'behave' predictably. Another way of saying this is: the more the leadership which the sentient system demands is in line with the leadership which the task-system can give, the more effective will the operation of the organization be.[48]

The regulatory systems set up to achieve this goal are generally informal components of the general management structure. Only rarely are they either fully specialized sets of personnel, or conceptually separate organizations. The regulation is thus achieved in only a haphazard manner. Each individual administrator makes a series of ad hoc decisions as to what the 'whole' ought to be, and the coordination of these decisions is left to serendipity. Planners often regard the institution of an accountability system as the solution to this dependence on chance and lack of coordination. As implemented, however, most accountability systems have little to do with either intergroup relations or task/sentient system relations. They are concerned, rather, with those variables which can be readily quantified, and which are directly related to the formal task of the organization (as defined by those in charge of the accountability system).[49]

However ineffective they may be with handling problems of sentient organization, accountability system implementations do upset sentient organization considerably in most cases. They disturb the patterned expectations which people have of each other; relationships of collaboration may be upset by splitting accountability or merging it

with another unit and so forth. Realism of information which organization members previously considered private (either to themselves individually, or to their primary work group) may be made public. Even in carefully planned implementations which pay close attention to the 'people-problems' involved, new forms of organization create new issues which must be met. A striking example of the mutual involvement of task and sentient systems, and of even a good idea creating problems, is the impact which the introduction of a set of representatives as mediators between component groups may produce. At the very minimum, when one representative goes from group A to group B four new dimensions of relationships are created:

1. Between group A and its representive (a).
2. Between representative (a) and group B.
3. Within group B with the addition of (a).
4. Within group A without (a). (following Miller and Rice, 1967, p. 22 et seq)

The situation grows even more complex when a group of representatives from two or more original groups is formed. Representatives may, in fact, or in suspicion, form greater attachment to their fellow representatives than they have to their original groups. Original groups may fail to function in the absence of their representative,[50] or they may continue to function and so change that the representative now represents only a past state of the group. In any case, issues of identity and boundaries become crucial.

This example suggests the way in which entirely different conditions and mechanisms of regulation may appear in large-scale organizations as opposed to small groups. In this connection, Miller and Rice

distinguish three branches of administrative activity, concerned with three different aspects of the task-system. They describe operational systems as the actual throughput producing activities of organizations, in which they convert imports into exports and achieve the direct conditions for gaining new resources. Maintenance systems are those which are necessary to deal with the non-direct conditions of production, that is, the conditions for the utilization of given resources (of which people are one) to achieve certain output. Regulating systems are those which supervene to see that operational systems carry on as they should.[51] In complex organizations the three systems will be distinct, and frequently will be administratively specialized.[52] This is more difficult to apply, in practice, to certain kinds of intricate or technologically sophisticated structures.

Complications set in as, for example, operating systems are specialized in various ways (e.g., purchasing, manufacturing, marketing, etc.). Regulation is needed wherever there is a discontinuity between boundaries of separate activities, that is, separate units of work. But in some cases it it much easier to institute regulation than in others. Automated chemical processes, for example, cannot be interrupted in midstream as can textile processes where part products are materially stable. Because of the impact of automation on regulatory systems, it cannot be regarded as simply an operative technological change in most cases. Clearly disputes over the efficacy of annual tests for assessing educational progress in relation to teacher-accountability involve this sort of issue. Further, automation may necessitate new and more responsive strategies for dealing with the organization's enviroment as it eliminates the need for intermediate

stores of resources, part or whole products. In the most elaborate case, the use of computers may completely reorder the entire regulative organization of an enterprise, as it enables continuous rather than periodic checking throughout a wide range of operative and maintenance systems and/or activities. In a similar sense, our own research has shown that advanced accountability technologies may disturb the informal structure of an organization in totally unforeseen ways.

Technological change may not only directly affect the internal regulating system of an organization, but it may also affect the environmental conditions which make one regulatory system or another more suited. Thus, the introduction of automated techniques may increase production to the extent that a previous shortage of an organization's products is eradicated. For example, in the case of a steel works studied by Miller and Rice:

> Instead of being production-dominated, as they had been for twenty years, the company's operations would become market-dominated. (Miller and Rice, 1967, p. 233)

Such a change necessitates greater responsiveness to consumer demands, greater flexibility in organizational functioning. Whether or not a company can restructure itself to produce these depends on its management and internal conditions, however. Were an enterprise unable to foresee the impacts of its technological changes, it would ultimately be doomed to failure. The planning dimensions of accountability systems are intended to produce this kind of awareness. As we have suggested, however, they are the most neglected parts of the package.

Most accountability systems are designed on paper to provide for a maximum total integration of organizational activities. In this

they take the organization as a unit, more or less undifferentiated vis-á-vis overall task. Most educational organizations are not like this, however. In part this is because they have in America operated in a sort of 'seller's market,' attempting to meet an accelerating demand for education. Building programs and district centralization and expansion reflect this situation. There is no competition over who is to provide education, rather only an attempt to economically provide a sufficient quantity. This stragegy of maximizing resource conservation and production domination in a seller's market may be thought of as having characterized American education in eras like the 1950's. Such a strategy requires that Miller and Rice (1967) call a "segmented control system" model of the enterprise. This model breaks the organization into a number of units, generally corresponding to (perceived) sub-tasks, for which performance standards are fairly fixed.

With the 'post-Sputnik' eara of the sixties, however, education moved into a different mode of operation. Maximizing consumer satisfaction became its dominant theme. This implies an "integrated cybernetic model" of the enterprise. Such a model relates the enterprise as a total system to a changing external environment, and implies a higher order control system engaged in continuous--not either temporally or task segmented--regulatory functioning. Now, this sounds like what we have described as the 'paper-model' of accountability system operation.[53] Many systems, in operation, flounder on an ambivalence between this view of the organization and the attempt of administrators to use them to achieve the aims of the former situation. In other words, systems designed to be used continuously are broken

into segments, designed to deal with the organization as a whole, they are used to evaluate parts. In the last couple of years, for both economic and social reasons, education's consumer satisfaction policy has again been challenged by a resource conservation one. Response to this change has come in a number of ways, but none of them involving systematic attention to the overall regulatory system of the organization.

This is partly so because education was rather tardy in instituting any sort of accountability programs. By the time they had come into vogue, the recession was almost upon us. Thus, misuse combined with a change in demand accentuated the confusion which implementation would likely have produced anyway. The implementation of accountability systems tended to break down boundaries without any clear decision as to what should go in their place. At one level this resulted in a number of directly task-related administrative problems. At another, it produced myriad identity crises in the schools. Unsure of their places in the organization most constituent groups began to demand, at the least, a clarification, more often a return to 'the good old days' or an improvement in their personal position without regard to the operation of the whole. Members of various groups could no longer depend on their collective security in the organizational context. As the structure broke down their projections became more primitive. Action became more dominated by emotions and by the search for security. This, in numerous ways has been the result of change and confusion, not of any fundamental flaw in accountability systems.

Notes

1. See Miller and Rice (1967, p. 15).

2. See Bateson et al. (1956).

3. See Section III, C-3, of each study, Appendices A, B, and C.

4. The best overall discussion of this basic cultural metaphor from the Greek notion of physics through social evolution to modern functionalism is Nisbet (1969). Compte and Durkheim are the key figures in the sociological popularization of the analogy.

5. How much this is the result of the fundamental place of the organic analogy in our Western culture as opposed to a necessary condition is a mute point.

6. See W.I. Thomas (1966). See also Merton (1957).

7. Klein (1932) is, as it were, the fountainhead of this approach to infantile devleopment. Klein (1959) is a useful summary of the relation of these early factors to adult life. We base our discussion primarily on the work of Klein (see also 1975) and various colleagues, including especially Bion (1961, 1963, 1965, 1970); Winnicott (1955, 1972); Segal (1967); and Rosenfeld (1952a, 1952b, 1954, 1965, 1974). Leading figures in the closely related object-relations school include Fairbairn (1952, 1954a, 1955, 1956, 1958); Glover (1955); Balint (1968); Guntrip (1969). Kernberg (1969) contains a useful analysis of the Kleinian approach from the perspective of the rival ego-psychological school. In the present analysis we combine the Kleinian object-relations approaches (which we see as essentially compatible) into a common one, bringing in convergent material from other traditions as well.

8. See Ferenczi (1909) for a key early paper on the development of this perspective.

9. One of the functions of rationalistic social organizations is to limit the complexity of interpersonal relationships. In modern western (as especially bureaucratic) society, the 'multiplex' relationships of small-scale primitive societies are replaced largely by 'monoplex' or single-purpose relationships (see Gluckman, 1955). This process is never complete, however, and accountability systems often suffer from the assumption that it can be. This leads them to discount the importance of people's subjective identification of the content of these relationships. While this may be less than in a tribal society, it is far from absent. Further, a relationship of restricted 'objective' content leave all the more opportunity for fantasy and projection. This is the essence of transference, as we shall discuss below.

10. Much of the same process takes place in organizations which appear by tacit agreement among members not to bring various past ideas into the foreground. In this way they construct the avenues for their operation and growth.

11. As Anna Freud has observed, repression is the most effective of the defenses the ego may use against unacceptable drives and/or libidinal attitudes; it is also the most dangerous:

> "The dissociation from the ego entailed by the withdrawl of consciousness from whole tracts of instinctual and affective life may destroy the integrity of the personality for good and all (1936, p. 50)."

We may note that we do not share with Freud any notion of the ego as a readily identifiable 'entity.' Rather, we see it as a convenient label for the function (more than the faculty) of balance and boundary maintenance. This point of view is well expressed by Fairbairn (see 1952 and passion).

12. Rieff has termed this "the first paradox of psychoanalytic treatment: that it is authoritarian in order to render the burden of infantile authority-figure tolerable (1959, p. 190)."

13. Some psychoanalytic therapists--designated the interpersonal school--favor an involved analyst so that the patient distinguishes his projections from a real person in a realistic relationship. Whatever its therapeutic value, this position seems to distort or confuse the nature of analysis as such. Prominent representatives of this perspective include Sullivan, Mullahy, Guntrip, and Thompson.

14. This, as we shall discuss below, is important to the consultant's understanding and structuring of his relationship with the organization. If he is constantly giving opinions or taking concrete actions, he becomes just another active member and is a) unable to freely gather information and b) impeded in distinguishing between the projections and accurate perceptions of organization members.

15. See Fenichel (1945, p. 571). Thus, it is the transference neurosis, in taking over the patient's original neurosis, becomes the vehicle for treatment. This notion is similar to the one behind training groups, Tavistock seminars, etc. Affect is expressed in a focused setting where its immediate effect on everyday affairs is minimized. It can then be interpreted. The assumption is that making its nature and source conscious is crucial to any lasting change in it. See below, this chapter.

16. It is this emphasis on the importance and universal expression of basic material which in Kleinian analysis reduces the emphasis on working backward through the defenses of the ego in a gradual process of analytically induced regression. This is also a theoretical justification to our argument (see Chapter IX) that short-term consultation and practitioner investigation are practical. Many of the important psychodynamics of the organization are readily apparent to a trained eye, although extensive analysis still requires lengthy study. See also Racker (1968, p. 41) and Segal (1967, p. 202) on interpreting transference from the start of analysis.

17. Similarly with organizations. The focus of interpretation often imposes itself on the analyst. It is fruitless to attempt to interpret issues the organization feels as peripheral when it is preoccupied with some central force of anxiety. This anxiety must be reduced to give strength to the organizational ego so that it can deal with the whole range of its functionings and continued growth.

18. See Chapter VIII on psychological investment in structure as well as Chapter IV.

19. Writers on object-relations have described 'schizoid phenomena' as basic to peronality organization. These are the results of early experiences in self-object distinction. A schizoid personality only becomes dominant as a clinical type, however, when a person withdraws from the external world and the future, and retreats into his internal world of the past (see Guntrip, 1969)). Involvement in organizations is an easy way of dealing with current object-relations which is sufficiently structured to obviate the individual's need to regress to avoid over intense and conflicted interpersonal encounters.

20. One of the problems of much choice theory in the foundation of economics is an assumption of rationality and consistency at the the level of individuals. This problem is carried over into accountability systems, which are largely off-shoots of micro-economic analysis.

21. The other important original case was the so-called leaderless group project used for officer selection (Bion, 1946).

    The technique emphasized group selection. The following discussion is based primarily on relevant papers collected in Bion (1961), especially Bion and Rickman (1961).

22. Similarly, it would be a foolish school administrator who failed to realize the extent to which education today constitutes a 'theatre of war.' It is not enough to implement proposals which would be adequate in an atmosphere of calm. One must have social relations and programs which can stand up under pressure.

23. See Stouffer et al. (1949a, 1949b) for the main research reports. Also Merton and Lazarsfeld [ed.] (1950) for commentary on these volumes, especially the article by Shils. Also Shils (1951) and Shils and Janowitz (1948) showed similar processes in the Wehrmacht.

24. Resistance refers broadly to points where a patient seems to try to undercut the treatment (which often he himself has sought).

25. Accountability projects frequently forget that they are asking people both to work within their organization and to view them objectively. The latter virtually requires the prespective of an outsider, yet implementations generally fail to structure situations for such 'outside' observation. An effective accountability system will provide for such 'ego' functions with social activities as well as formal information processing.

26. Here we will be drawing on a number of sources, but still most important among them remains the work of Bion. Slater (1966) has elaborated this perspective very helpfully.

27. The notion of personal self as an important aspect of individual psychology was in fact developed by Adler before Freud took it up (cf. 1912).

28. Note the similarity to Lawrence and Lorsch on organizations, as discussed above.

29. There is some debate between analysts who believe that the ego is a development relatively late in life (the 'mainstream view') and those who regard the infant as initially having a complete ego. The latter group (which includes Fairbairn and Klein most prominently) suggests that this 'pristine ego' is injured --especially split--by early life traumas, and that its ramification is the developmental struggle. Which view one holds does not fundamentally affect our argument.

30. Bion suggests that these states are not ordered developmentally. Slater argues (convincingly) that they are.

31. See Merton (1957) on this factor in the constitution of reference groups. (Also Merton's contribution to Merton and Lazarsfeld [1950].)

32. Although incongruency is not simply bad; it is a fact of life, based on the differences between people. A child must learn to deal with this, neither being overwhelmed by it nor over-protected from it.

33. A term coined by Reich (1933) to describe the structure of defenses which form the foundation of a person's individuality (character) against the world.

34. The main assumption, by the way, is a device by which we conceptualize the group's collective participation in maintaining one or another emotional identity. It does not refer to any notion of conscious choice; far from it. In most cases members of groups are quite unaware of this deeper level of functioning until it is brought to their attention by a leader. Indeed, in most groups, leaders are not themselves fully aware of this emotional level; it takes a specially trained leader in a circumstance which allows him a certain distanced observation to point out the substratum of group life.

35. Slater holds a different view of this as we shall explain. In general, we accept his argument, although with some qualifications. These last emphasize the frequency of movement from one basic-assumption state to another, however accurate the general view of the tendency of social change to follow one course through may be.

36. We shall focus especially on leadership here, where the relation to problems of organizational management is manifest.

37. Miller and Rice (1967).

38. This is the meaning behind something of a confusion in Bion's discussion of the same phenomena, where he says, "regression includes the belief that a group exists" (Bion, 1961b, p. 141, quoted above, p. 33, this chapter). The group appears to the individual as an outside force, a) because he is unaware of the extent of his unconscious participation and b) because the group, i.e., the set of relationships is beyond his control, even in its effect on his emotions.

39. See Mahler (1968, 1972) for psychoanalytic discussion of symbiosis and separation in childhood.

40. A point we take up empirically in the case studies, expecially No. 1; see also Chapter V.

41. An important point of our implementation strategy; see Chapter VIII.

42. In a small group the 'emotionality' of this attachment is readily recognizable. In a larger group, though, it is still present in the attachments of members. One need only attempt a change to see how emotionally members are invested in their organizational identities.

43. See Homans (1950) and Slater (1966) for arguments as to the importance of small group studies in even macro-sociology. The former emphasizes the universality and enduring characteristics of the group; the latter, its exemplification of processes which occur more widely.

44. Miller and Rice (1967).

45. Of course, the extent to which even the formal task is well and explicitly formulated varies.

46. The tasks and sentient system distinction somewhat parallels Bions's 'work-group'/'basic-assumption group' dichotomy. The fit is not exact, however. Bion's emphasis is on the group as such, especially therapy and developmental groups where discovery is the task. Miller and Rice place greater stress on the role of both technology and environment.

47. See Merton (1936) and Merton (1957), Chapter I for good discussions of intended consequences from a functionalist or system-oriented point of view.

48. We shall have more to say directly on the subject of leadership in the last part of the next chapter.

49. Note that those in charge of the accountability systems are by no means always those in positions of greatest seniority or control over the organization as a whole. Senior managements are in fact often deficient in communicating their conceptions of task orientation to accountability administrators. An implementation consultant's job includes making sure that they do.

50. See Bion (1961) on leadership exercised by the absent member.

51. We, as the reader will observe, suggest that an adequate regulatory system will deal directly with sentient relations as well as operational systems.

52. In educational systems, this is usually clearly the case. Teaching and counseling are the main operational activities. Support staff carry out maintenance functions and administrators are largely concerned with regulation. Administrators at the line (building) level are also directly involved in the maintenance system however (for example, as they deal with the discipline problems or dress codes among students). This blurs the maintenance/regulation boundary somewhat. In addition, it may be noted that this trichotomy does not deal with planning.

53. See discussion in Chapter II.

Chapter IV

RESPONSES TO ACCOUNTABILITY IMPLEMENTATIONS

Accountability systems are often conceived in the abstract; organizations are often analyzed on a purely formal level. What happens when the two formal systems confront each other? Even more, what happens when the formal accountability system is brought into the informal and unconscious complexities of the organization? These are the questions with which this chapter deals in particular. We have already considered on a more theoretical plane some of the psycho-social factors which go into the production and therefore the explanation of the problems which arise. In the introduction we described the overemphasis on the technical, which has run many accountability implementations aground. In the first part of this chapter we shall focus on the range of problems which have occurred, and their relationship with the type of accountability system involved. In the second part, we shall look at several of the underlying factors which produce the implementation problems (as opposed to system-problems). Throughout, our focus will be rather more narrowly on the practical issues than it has been in the preceding chapters.

The Dimensions of Failure and Success: Problems which occur with accountability systems may be crudely categorized under two heads: those stemming from technical misuse, and those stemming from psycho-social aspects. Frequently, of course, categorization is overlapping or debatable. It is interesting to note that educational administrators themselves seem usually to regard problems as technical--even in cases where they appear to us to be clearly psycho-social. We shall

follow our own views in categorizing. It may be suggested, in fact, that the disparity between the views of outside analysts and those of members of the organizations points up, rather than obscures the nature of the problems in question. Organization members see problems as technical, often, because they see the accountability systems as purely technical.

Technical Problems: We shall be brief in this section, as it is not our major concern, and we shall focus on technical issues (we might more broadly say 'formal') only as they relate to implementation.

The first area of formal action which determines the design and implementation of an accountability system is the creation of an administrative or legislative mandate for one. The way in which this is done can have considerable impact on the content and quality of result. First off, a written 'contract' of some sort is virtually mandatory to getting an accountability system off the ground. Since such systems exist in order to make administration explicit, they must be subject to the same rule. The most important error which stems from problems in written guidelines is unintentional suboptimization. Many programs are designed specifically at a sub-optimal level in order to have greater breadth of options for adaptation to new circumstances. The danger lies in simply failing to produce a penetrating and specific enough analysis of organizational problems and goals. Without such an analysis it is easy for an accountability system to degenerate into pure ideology --the most common problem we found in our research. An insufficiently specific document may also leave the administrators charged with the implementation unsure about the extent of budgetary and/or other support

which the program will receive. Improvisation is required wherever the contract is not explicit. In general, of course, schools do not suffer from an excess of creativity. But improvisation where there are not specific contextual supports for creative innovations is likely to be a matter of falling-back on old norms of behavior. The organizational system always has a tremendous amount of inertia, even where it manifests internal contradictions and dysfunctional adaptations. It will pull an insufficiently concerted change effort back into its own patterns of operations. Further, unless creative improvisations are themselves a specific aim of the implementation effort, they are not likely to be carried through systematically enough to work. Accountability systems are attempts to increase the systematicity and integration of organizational work. Therefore, however desirable individual variations may be for some purposes, they are not desirable as a part of the accountability program. It should leave room for them, where they are wanted. It should not smother them, but it should not expect them to do its work.

On the other hand, accountability mandates can and have been too specific. Buchmiller (1974) has commented on the tendency of strictly prescriptive contracts or legislation to become rapidly outdated. Part of the battle is to produce adequate guidelines in the mandate without attempting to prescribe the whole system. The contract must be susceptible to reformulation during the course of implementation, as experience shows, for example, areas in which it may have been overambitious. If this is not done, then there is a tendency for administrators to continue attempting to implement a program which is demonstrably not working. Some useful work has been done in the area of

contingency planning efforts related to accountability systems (esp. Farquhar et al., 1971; Sumner, 1971) but this cannot substitute for continuous reevaluation.

A related problem comes with an insufficiently broad accountability mandate. Where too narrow a problem is identified as the object of the implementation, it is difficult to go beyond mere symptoms to root causes. The accountability system becomes the domain of only one segment of the organization. In the case of performance contracting, for example, this problem of definition may accent the tendency to teach directly to examinations, and may make the performance-contracted sector only something of a patch sewn onto the fabric of the rest of the organization.

The most prevalent source of problems in local implementations is the failure to disseminate information and skills to all the necessary middle- and lower-level personnel in the organization. We are not here concerned with the willingness of these persons to understand and become involved with the system, but with the planning and practice of involving them. Often the formal implementation plan does not allow for the extensive retraining which will be necessary--or does not even recognize it. Much of the issue here has to do with the level of complexity of the system which is chosen--whatever its goals in the organization. Some--perhaps most--accountability implementations are at the level of 'counting.' They are concerned primarily with information gathering and management, not with technical uses of the information. Thus they create additional tasks for system members, but not markedly different or more complex ones. They add quantitatively but not qualitatively to the organization's task requirements.

Other more complex systems, however, make use of sophisticated analytic techniques which require considerable retraining of existing personnel and the hiring of new staff for specialized tasks. Sophisticated operational research systems involve advanced statistics, the use of algorithms, for example, to handle very large volumes of data which the school district does not otherwise confront. This means that new staff and quite likely equipment will be required. Thus a considerable commitment is made to the implementation of the system. This also requires the introduction of a set of technical experts outside of the ordinary run of school functioning. Administrators may be loath to question the system or its specialists because of their own unfamiliarity with the area. At the same time, these new personnel are likely to be experts in systems-analysis, not in education. Last, but not least, this means that high-level decision-making administrators will have to learn to work with information of a very different kind from that to which they are accustomed. The system, it must be remembered (though it is often forgotten), does not provide answers but only more or less adequate information. The decisions must still be made. And the ability to use this information is perhaps the most overlooked of the new skills which will be required when an accountability program is instituted.

One technical problem which has troubled a number of implementations is the need for measurable evaluative criteria. Systems have often been introduced which require a level of qualitative data both too specific and too sophisticated for the school district. Not only does this create staffing problems, it means that the district will

be forced to resort to partial and indirect measures of many meaningful skills or achievements. This is partly a problem with the standardization which such systems introduce, partly a matter of the simple impossibility of detailed qualitative measurement of complex skills such as teaching. The arbitrary measures which are employed exacerbate staff tensions and often mislead administrators and planners. Planning on overspecific information exaggerates the problems which stem from uncertainty of horizons and information in the best of circumstances (see March and Olsen, 1976). In Carpenter et al.'s words:

> the nature of standardized norm-referenced tests makes them clumsy and inaccurate devices for measuring the effectiveness of a learning system. (Carpenter, 1971, Pt. 3, p. 77)

Performance-contracting implementations have perhaps suffered from this variety of problem more than any other formal management approach.

The search for performance criteria is really an indication that the problem lies often at a more fundamental level than the formal accountability system. It is an admission that districts and states have been unable to state precisely the goals of their educational enterprise. They have, in some instances, attempted to substitute accountability systems for these goals, rather than recognizing that the systems depend on the goals, but don't produce them. Not all educational objectives can be made precise and applied rigorously. Some are indefinite by nature. The design of an accountability system must leave room for these partially subjective aims of education at the same time that it defines its approach to measuring the more objective ones. And the rewards system of an educational enterprise must leave middle-level administration a certain amount of discretion

for encouraging creativity and efforts to attain these intangible goals, not throw them out because they cannot be measured.

There is also a dimension of fit between the technical complexity and sophistication of an accountability system and the district in which it is implemented. Some districts are better able--as social systems--to carry a complex accountability effort. Some work in complex environments, others in relatively stable and simple ones. The complexity of the environment does not necessarily mean that a complex accountability system should be implemented. Often it means that attention needs to be focused. Where manifold pressures are confronting educators and their pupils, the danger is not that the system will be too simple to cope as much as that it will become too diffuse to focus on its major objectives. Differentiation is useless without integration, and without a clear overall self-awareness and sense of direction. Technical issues cannot be decided, in sum, simply by absolute measures of quality. They require analysis of the way the system will fit into the particular educational organization.

Psycho-Social Problems: Most of this study, and especially the case analyses which follow, is devoted to consideration of the psycho-social problems which arise in implementing accountability systems. We shall only summarize here. The first sign of psycho-social disturbance is generally teacher unrest. More exceptionally, it is middle-level administrators who complain. These problems are generally the result of disruptions in sentient organization produced by the new accountability measures or directly by the implementation techniques. The most common sentient disturbance is the threat to job security which many teachers see in accountability, especially coming in a

period of economic recession. This is exacerbated by the indefiniteness of the teaching process itself. No one is really sure what makes teaching successful, and yet accountability systems often introduce very precise behavioral objectives, on which they propose to evaluate instruction generally (and sometimes teachers in particular).

This suggests the other main area of sentient disturbance: the feeling among professional staff that accountability somehow devalues their contribution to the educational process. They seem to feel that the introduction of a formal system is tantamount to treating them as mere technologists, simply operatives in a rationalized system rather than creative professionals. This, we think, is at least as important as sheer volume of work in teachers' complaints about paper tasks under accountability systems. It is the feeling of being reduced in both status and in task which bothers teachers. Clearly the filling out of forms can never be as satisfying as teaching, no matter how familiar teachers are with the necessity of the information to the overall educational effort.

The third area of sentient disturbance is more a matter of exacerbating old problems than creating new ones. It is the tendency of formal accountability systems to increase the social distance among school system members--both vertically and horizontally. The formal techniques which are designed to increase communication have sometimes the effect of replacing the already extant communication networks of the organization. Since these latter have been built up over long periods of experimentation, adjustment and cooperation, no new system can be an adequate replacement. In addition, the formal nature of the accountability apparatus limits the kinds of information which

can be passed through its channels. And no simple information is the same as face-to-face communication when it comes to increasing sentient confidence.

These problems are all important. Overall, however, we found accountability systems less dramatically producers of psycho-social problems than products of them. Accountability systems tend to be introduced and used as (usually inadequate) accommodations to fundamental organizational conflicts. These need to be tackled head on. The implementation process could in many instances provide an opportunity for doing this, but it is seldom so used. This is a) because the problems would have to be publically recognized, and b) because the system is credited with exaggerated powers of removal or resolution vis-a-vis these problems. One of the most important lessons in management which educational decision-makers could learn is not to expect a fully 'rational' system. It is important not to expect accountability to be a panacea, if it is to produce the real but limited benefits of which it is capable.

Underlying Factors: Here we shall go into some of the underlying issues which govern responses to accountability implementation. These we shall discuss, not so much theoretical matters as conflicts which have to be worked out and problems which have to be dealt with on a practical level in every implementation. The first of these is the social character of motivation, the second is the investment which organizational members have in old structures, the third is the conflict between too much and too little leadership, the fourth is the aim of the system in implementors' minds.

The Social Roots of Motivation: It is usually assumed without any further consideration that motivation is a matter of individual determination. There are debates concerning the relative importance of rewards, punishments, job satisfaction, working conditions, etc., but the fundamentally social nature of almost all motivation to continue an effort over long periods of time is nearly universally overlooked. Small groups are, however, the primary source of stability in individual lives and of the incentive to go beyond minimum definitions of tasks.

We have already described some of the psychological foundations which produce this state of affairs. The individual is primarily a construct of defenses against uncertainties, confusions, pressures and drives. Most fundamentally, he is the product of the splitting of objects into aspects defined by their meaning to him, existentially. These boundaries and defenses are maintained through stable contraposition to other people, especially in small groups. The nature of the contrapositions through which he matures and in which he lives shapes the directions of the individual's interests and efforts, and the emotional strength which he can bring to them.

This emotional strength is particularly important in relation to accountability implementations. The latter are not made or broken (as some administrators appear to think) on issues of the intelligence or lack thereof among teachers. They are made or broken on the ability of the system-members to give up stable attachments in favor of partly envisioned new ones. They depend on the ability to maintain functioning amid external and formal flux. No matter how much an accountability system may work to formalize operations in the long term, it works

in the short term to destablize them, and thus increase dependence on the informal. This means essentially on the organizational infrastructure of small groups and social networks.

Rather than being a simple desire or willingness to work, motivation is a complex of interconnected needs, desires, long- and short-term ends and abilities to reconcile these and focus on a course of action. It may be objected that this definition is to broaden the scope of the term 'motivation' too much, but we think not. In particular, we suggest that the narrowness of the more common usage is achieved only by leaving implicit a number of essential elements. It is, for reasons we discussed in Chapters II and III, impossible to imaging a psychological self distinct from a social context. But it is also impossible to find any 'motivation' in a concrete instance, which does not involve a specific end, or rationalization of ends. In many analyses in industrial contexts, motivation has come to be treated as very close to ambition. Thus people were considered to be highly motivated as they sought supervisory approval through task performance. In other words, motivation was seen as that which one had to have in order to do the work necessary to secure promotion.

Such a category may be only tangentially related to the reasons for which people work--either consciously or especially unconsciously. It is necessary to take their goals into account in order to understand what makes them work. And it is necessary to take the unconscious accommodation toward which they strive into account as well. Most motivation theory assumes that the former can be reduced to a single dimension--self benefit. The problems with this are basically four: 1) ends are in competition for the allocation of resources

which are always limited; 2) some ends may immediately conflict with each other so that some disappointment is inevitable (which may cause people to postpone selection of either, and thus jeopardize both); 3) planning takes place on both long- and short-term perspectives, and the two do not automatically fit, as people frequently minimize perceived benefits at one range instead of another; 4) people are not perfect judges of what will bring them happiness or satisfaction in the future, even in the short term. This is aggravated by the inevitable inadequacy of the information on which they must plan and decide. In sum, people simply do not rationalize their various goals and desires into a homogeneous dimension of 'benefit' the way that corporations may (to an extent) rationalize their goals as aspects of the fundamental one of making profits.

Since individuals do not fully and explicitly set out their goals, the comparisons, evaluations and rationalizations which they make, even of those goals which are conscious, are relatively ad hoc. The social context of the numerous individual decisions acts to shape them and give them consistency. There are two especially important aspects to this. First, this gives (perhaps without the individual being conscious of it) an order to his numerous efforts. Because the social context is relatively consistent over time (or rather, to the extent it is) it helps to shape the stimuli which will guide the individual in numerous different decisions over time. Instead of constantly changing his direction with the vicissitudes of circumstance, the individual within a secure social context will be likely to act with considerable consistency. Social norms, values, codes of rules, etc.,

all act to foster this consistency. This is one of the most important ways in which social organization helps to enhance task successes.

The second shaping influence of the social context is related to this, but acts through the 'other' members of the collectivity (when seen from any one individual's perspective). This is the factor of mutual influence and definition of the situation. Theorists of competitive games have frequently had to deal with the problem of actors' respective inabilities to anticipate the actions of each other. This problem is accentuated when one moves beyond simple dyadic games to complex social situations. Here it becomes unclear what the succession of acts is, what is response to what. Actors come to base their actions on the (relative) continuity of the whole. In other words, instead of being focused on a single other individual, or on simply a number of individuals, they came to calculate (consciously or unconsciously) the reactions of the situation, of society to what they themselves may do. The regularity of these "others'" actions is thus important as the baseline against which each individual plans his own. As the actions of these "others" become inconsistent, it becomes difficult for the individual to plan, because he has so many "others" to take into account.

Motivation is socialized, thus, in its ability to persist over time in a consistent line of attack. It is also socialized in that everyone's accommodation to the demands of the group helps to order the situation for his future satisfaction in a way that his own individual planning and decision-making could never do. It helps to effectively take into account all the numerous 'extra' variables that must escape the individual's notice, as well as to smooth out

the ups and downs--and sideways shifts--of individual preference orderings over time. With the exception of action in the midst of revolutionary circumstances, this is the vital core of social life. Without this social stability, the ambivalence of each individual as regards virtually every choice of his existence would produce continually changing directional tendencies. So narrow is his balance of drives and desires that each decision would imply the immediate supersession of (or at least search for) its opposite. No serious dialectician would expect such a rapid series of reversals. Organization mediates these changes, making them less frequent but more radical.

The individual's basic aim, most of the time, is to preserve a certain stability of functioning. Only if he has this can he work for various subsidiary goals. In quite a similar sense, organizations must strive to maintain stable functioning unless they plan to undergo really radical changes. Accountability systems are a problem--not in themselves an asset--in this regard. To be more exact: implementing accountability systems, where these do not in fact confront basic organizational issues is usually to seek a subsidiary goal at the same time that one disturbs stable functioning. This means that the organization, especially the underlying sentient organization, is no longer able to effectively channel people's conscious efforts in accord with a complex system of needs. No longer can it lead them unconsciously in stable directions. A stably functioning accountability system would not necessarily be a threat in this regard. If it forced a critical perspective on administrators, it might be a considerable asset. This would not be because it spared the organization the need to change, but because it made that change gradual and continuous.

An effective long-term planning system can allow an organization to make frequent adjustments of small scale tending toward larger ones rather than remain rigid--or even more backwards--before making a catastrophic jump to a new pattern of operation. While individuals can work consistently and maintain secure motivational patterns through gradual changes, it is the precise nature of revolutionary changes that they cannot.

The implementation of a substantial new accountability system means, as we have argued theoretically and will show empirically in the next three chapters especially, a reorganization of both task and sentient systems. Frequently this reorganization is substantial, for two reasons. One is, of course, that the accountability system may be a very penetrating one which itself forces rethinking of fundamental organizational issues. The other, more interesting, reason is that accountability systems are often not implemented until late in a series of traumatic events or other organizational crises. It is a reaction to these earlier problems, a stop-gap effort. It is questionable in the first place whether an accountability system can accomplish this under the best of circumstances. More crucially, though, is the fact that the implementation generally creates enough disturbance in the organization that the accountability system becomes the focus for a whole series of past and present strains, pressures, and problems. Ironically, given the intention of administrators, it becomes the straw that breaks the camel's back.

The social, as opposed to individual, nature of motivation is a key reason for this. If individuals did act as really discrete units, they would (in many cases) be likely to respond to the individualistic

demands of the accountability system. Where it switches around the affiliations people have in the task system (and thus the evaluative system) they would simply continue with their work. But, of course, the work cannot be done by isolated individuals--that is the reason the organization exists. It is foolish to think that the organization can be made up of isolated individuals. And it is perhaps meaningless to speculate on what such individuals would be like. They so manifestly do not exist that every time we attempt to speak about them, we run into a series of contradictions.

In any event, the sentient organization of groups and personal relations is vital to the motivation of the members of the organizations. It not only increases their willingness to work but shapes the directions of their application in ways that no amount of formal direction could do. But accountability system implementations tend to ignore this dimension entirely. They thus neither take advantage of the ways in which sentient systems can be mobilized (if effectively organized) to help them nor do they take into account the inertia with which the sentient systems will confront them. Where conflicts arise the latter tends to erupt sometimes into open hostility, and always into a decrease in effective motivation. Disruptions in sentient organization--whether due to the accountability system, predating or accompanying it--are the prime causal factor leading to breakdowns in motivation. Such motivational problems were reported in each of our main case studies (with considerable emphasis from many administrators) and are very common throughout the literature and unpublished reports on accountability implementations.

Investment in Structure: In a variety of ways, both sentient and material, people have made investments in any structure in which they participate. If it has endured over a considerable amount of time and not brought them great hardship, their investment will be considerable. It is impossible for people, no matter how intelligent or dedicated, to make a new decision in every situation. Instead, it is necessary that situations be similar enough through time to allow them to apply learned rules, to repeat past decisions on the basis of certain cues. They thus have an investment in the continuity of structures as such, as well as in any particular products of these structures. This is one of the reasons for the great inertia which social organizations present to planned change--and one reason why so much change is unintentional and ill-ordered.

Implementations of accountability systems have often ignored or underestimated this investment in structure. They have often regarded real conflicts of interest as simply stubborn resistances. But accountability implementations do directly threaten the ability of actors to make practical everyday judgments. This ability is a hidden part of their professional and organizational expertise. Both their task effectiveness and the quality of their organizational lives suffer when it is impaired. While the resistance which teachers may pose to such programs is real, it is not just stubbornness. Nor does it usually stem primarily from misunderstanding. This last is the most common diagnosis of administrators and outside consultants alike. They assume that with better communication alone, with more information about the aims, design, and operation of the accountability system that members of the organization will come to appreciate

its necessity or utility. That this is seldom the case is due to the fact that teachers' negative perceptions of the secondary effects of accountability implementations are frequently quite accurate.

At the very least, such an implementation will make a familiar organization less familiar. It will introduce a new set of parameters into the situation, and no one, not even the most informed planner can know what their many results will be as they are worked out in daily organizational life. In many cases, intrusive secondary effects will not stop with defamiliarization. There will be tangible alterations in the material operation of the school system. We would observe that teachers tend to anticipate this far more than we have seen it occur in reality--but then so do planners. The material changes which occur in the rewards and security sub-systems of the school district may be fairly subtle or they may be quite large (as where central administrators take over authority previously held by principals). They are likely to affect those who have been most successful under the old order the most. Those who have not been successful are likely to complain either way--so dissatisfaction is maximized. The effects of this cannot be overstressed. Time and again accountability systems have acted to undermine the authority of those who held senior (but intermediate) positions in the district hierarchy. These are the people who have most to lose, and also those with the greatest ability to stymie an implementation program. Many implementation designs, in fact, make principals important agents in introducing (though not choosing or running) systems which are direct threats to their positions and power. It is no wonder that they should be less than enthu-

siastic or effective change agents. It is a great wonder that implementors do not anticipate this problem.

In any implementation it is obvious that most of the organizational structure will remain unchanged--although its meaning will change as the rest of the components of the system change. It is important to the efficacy of the new system that it be able to depend on this stability of the rest of the structure, since a) it is only a part of organizational operation and b) in the first years of its operation it will need to be continually revised and adapted to local exigencies and new information. This adaptation cannot be accomplished if the local situation does not present a reasonably clear order. More than this, the investment of people in the rest of the structure is necessary to lead them to keep it intact and functioning despite other instabilities. Since accountability systems are always partial (and generally even more partial than they need to be) reorderings of the organization, they should be presented with their boundaries and limits clear, so that they do not undermine the stability of the whole in the interest of the improvement of a part. Usually, however, accountability implementations aggravate their own problems by presenting themselves as far more wide-reaching (and therefore threatening) than they really are. The primary reason for this is that they are chosen by school districts, not for their realistic values generally, but as a mythological panacea for a whole range of problems which are not directly confronted.

Investment in structure is, then, a necessary condition for the success of an accountability system. It is also a major factor in the failure of accountability implementations. The central reason it can work against a system is that an implementation fails to take it

into account and ally the formal system to its informal underpinning. Investment in structure is indeed conservative, and as such is often looked down upon in an educational world oriented strongly toward change. But it is important that change, if it is to be planned and controlled, proceed in a continuous fashion. If it does not, the baseline against which people plan concerted action is irrevocably lost.

Leadership: The central question which we address concerning leadership is that of balance between too much and too little. Leadership we see on two levels--that of the actions of particular individuals and groups, and that of a system-function. Leadership as a system-function may be simply identified as the ability to carry out planned and directed operations, including intentional change. Although not quite identical, it is largely the same as the ability to carry out concerted action in general. In most educational or other special purpose organizations, leadership is the sole route to concertedness. It may be argued however that multiplex social groups carry out concerted action without anything which could be identified as leadership in the same sense that formal organizations have leadership. This is rare, debatable, and largely tangential to our present argument.

Leadership as an activity of individuals and groups vis-a-vis others is quite a different matter. It is not simply a good to be valued (although with complex effects) as is the system-function of leadership. Too little leadership from those in charge of formal organizations usually leaves an emotional vacuum as well as reduces the extent of organization itself. But too much leadership can be had as well, and its negative effects can be just as great. In this

sense leadership is the ability of one individual or group to influence the actions of others; it is a kind of power. Such power is, of course, important to the direction of formal organizations, especially the more centralized they are. But just as it is the ability to order activity, it is also an ability to disrupt order. Since the vast majority of organization escapes anyone's (or even any formal accountability system's) consciousness and cognizance, control can only be partial. At best, then, leadership will only be exercised where consciousness is considerable, and not in the unconscious aspects of organizational operation (this is not to say that these must remain unconscious). More likely the effects of leader's activities will extend without any control into areas beyond his awareness. One aim of accountability systems is to minimize this process. There are two aspects to this effort--one usually forgotten. The one which is commonly remembered is the attempt to extend the range of organizational phenomena which are open to conscious leadership. The other side, usually left out of implementations, is the limitation of the unintentional consequences of purposive actions.

The most important area of such unintentional interference which we have described is task actions which disrupt sentient organization. Let us return to Miller and Rice's words on this:

> We have tried to show that inadequate definition of task-system boundaries presents major difficulties in controlling sentient boundaries; and, conversely, that inadequate control of sentient boundaries can lead to the redefinition of tasks and task systems. (Miller and Rice, 1967, p. 262)

Neither aspect can be fully controlled, of course. The effort is simply to achieve an acceptable tolerance of definition. This will help to render administrative action predictable. In particular, the

more task and sentient systems, conscious and unconscious systems are congruent, the more the organization can behave predictably. This is achieved only by intentional planning. Such congruence will seldom be accidental in organizations which have active purposive ordering of task systems. Effort must be introduced to see that group structure overlaps between the two systems and that changes in one are introduced with the collaboration of the other. Task organization will always be the main item of administrative concern. But there is an infinite number of tasks requiring leadership at any one time, and only a finite amount of leadership. In result, even the best planned purposive actions must be carried out through the conscious and unconscious collaboration of sentient groups. They cannot come just from above or from the center.

Sentient groups which are internally disorganized cannot carry out this sort of work for themselves. They look accordingly to aggrandized visions of outside leaders. They set these leaders on pedestals, and eventually (as we have described in Chapter III) gain strength through their common action in relation to the leader. Such leaders are generally in for an overthrow and a fall from power as sudden and extreme as their rise. Other sentient groups, however, which are rigidly organized internally, admit of almost no external leadership. They attempt to maintain themselves statically--until such point as environmental pressure forces them to break up altogether. Neither type of group, obviously, is amenable to effective administration in a task-oriented organization (although each may have its short-term temptations and attractions to administrators). The basic rule is not always to approach matters directly through task and technical

changes, but also to attempt to build the kind of sentient system which will support the kinds of tasks required. The more the leadership which the sentient group demands is in line with the leadership which the task-system can give, the more effective will the operation of the organization be.

The Aims of Accountability: Obviously, all the specific technical goals of accountability systems and their manifestations are relevant to their fate. Here we shall only focus, briefly, on one aspect. This we can identify with the proposition that accountability systems are much more effective in building organization than in saving it. More often, in our investigation, they appear to have been instituted late in a series of organizational difficulties. The confusion of the situation and the failure of previous attempts at resolution of conflicts have led administrators to attempt this means of reasserting their control. But in such a situation, obviously the unintended consequences of their actions will be considerably greater than in stable circumstances. The implementation of the system aimed at increasing predictability and control may in fact work to impair both.

This is both an aggravation to and an explanation for the tendency of accountability systems to emphasize information-gathering over planning. Because administrators are trying to gain control over a chaotic situation, they react to rather than act on the system. Lack of information appears as the most obvious source of their lack of control--and so they proliferate information-gathering instruments. But, this enters on a circle of repetitions. More and more information will be required as long as changes in the task system are pursued

without coordination with the sentient system. The only kind of accountability system which can effectively relate task and sentient systems is one which expects both to change over time and works to direct that change. Accountability is properly the effort to build a new system in accord with certain choices about how such a system should be constructed. Because it is a new implementation, it will always have disruptive effects on the organization. But because it can be a coordinate planning system, it may be able to put a new organization together--even where the old one can't be patched. This is possible, of course, only if the system is supported by a widespread combination of support and flexibility in the sentient infrastructure of the organization.

Chapter V

AN EXCESS OF CONTROL: CASE STUDY ONE

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try again," the saying goes. But what if first successes come easily? Should one continue to attempt more success, or should there be caution? One of the lessons to be learned from group psychology is that first successes tend to come out of proportion to the real contributions of leaders, and tend to be highly unstable. The leader who accepts such support uncritically is putting himself in danger of a later revolt or organizational collapse. At the very least he is building on the irrational, and this is likely to exacerbate tensions in the long run. This case study concerns a school district where leadership was built on the exaggerated sentient needs of the organization, more than on its reasonable task requirements. This situation cannot be explained simply by individual personalities involved. It is a matter of unconscious collaboration among many actors, individually and as groups. The apparent success and deeper problems of the accountability implementation in this district were largely results of this emotional situation.

The underlying factors which can lead to this kind of leadership problem include, particularly, the insecurity of organizational members and the uncertainty which they may feel regarding the status of the organization and their places within the organization. As we have suggested, organizations are a key way in which individuals in modern society find an element of secure identity. When organizations change,

this refuge is undermined. Change in many ways dominates security in modern life, and so each new change is more likely to be seen as threat than as opportunity or freedom. When considering any series of planned changes, it is important to look not only at what the changes set out to accomplish and whether in themselves they were well geared to this task, but also at how well the changes fit with the psychosocial situation in which they must be achieved. And when we see either a disproportionate concentration of authority or a disproportionate crisis in authority, we should look to the structural factors which made for this imbalance. Whatever his own psychology, a leader of great power tends to fill a need in the organization. A single leader may not be the best way to fill such a need, however, and the need may not be a direct function of the organization's manifest or formal tasks.

The Situation: The Kepler School System attempts to maintain its integration in the face of a complex and rapidly changing environment. New residents and new ideas make for new demands from its local community. State and federal educational organizations put new constraints on its operations and at the same time give it new opportunities. Changing policies and politics, court decisions and economic conditions, all bring pressures to bear. These pressures are not only new; they fluctuate in their intensity and compete for primacy of attention. The 'ability to pay' for educational resources seems basic to administrators and is affected by new tax structures, reduced receipts and changes in state allocation procedures. But these factors cannot be dealt with in isolation. The administrator must take account

of increased community pressure for accountability, for demonstrated productivity. Yet he doesn't want to sacrifice quality to economy, innovation to accountability. The primary response of the school system to this situation is diversification.

In this, it attempts to meet the complexity of the demands its environment places upon it by in turn becoming more complex itself. This creates a multitude of new problems of administration. Parodoxically, the increased internal differentiation often reinforces complaints from the community. Parents and officals say that they do not understand what is going on in the school. The 'accountability' which they demand is that the productivity of the school be measured on the dimensions they propose, and that the needs for expenditure be understood by those who must produce the money. None of these demands is intrinsically unfair, and yet together they place administrators in a difficult bind. One the one hand, they must differentiate the line functions of the educational system. On the other hand, they, as central administrators, remain responsible for the operation of an entire system which is expected to show a high degree of integration. They must report in concrete terms the results of their efforts, and similarly justify their requests for support.

These reports and requests must be condensed into a few dimensions, for two reasons. First, no administrator is able to be fully aware of what is going on at the line level throughout the organization. This is not to say that he should not be somewhat aware, but rather that he must delegate authority, even though he cannot ultimately delegate responsibility. If he spent much of his time and effort inquiring into the locally specific conditions, he would have no way of carrying

out his overall responsibilities. In fact, this already happens. Pressured by particular crises, central office administrators are forced into a reactive posture, running about to put out local fires. This prevents them from undertaking the needed long-term planning efforts and from giving full attention to problems of integrating the various parts and aspects of the organization.

The second reason that condensation is necessary follows on this. If it is impossible for full-time administrators with their staffs to work with the full diversity of line operations at once, it is still more difficult for school board and community members--or for that matter legislative bodies--to assimilate a wide range of complex information about the school district. Decisions can only reasonably be made among variables which can be fairly readily grasped, when the decision makers are unable to conduct extensive studies of their own. This last is certainly the case for the part-time members of the Kepler Board of Education. It is often all the more true of the leaders of community organizations and pressure groups. In extreme form, it is this same process of condensation which makes for the dramatic 'issues' which from time to time arouse the community. It is always easier for people to think in terms of preconceived categories than in terms of new ones, especially new ones requiring a reanalysis of the situation. And, where thinking is concerned, people generally tend to follow the path of least resistance.

In Kepler, the community itself has undergone major changes in recent years. It has become less self-contained, culturally and socially as well as economically. Although it still prides itself on what it describes as a 'simple, natural and healthy' environment,

cosmopolitan influences are rapidly increasing. The town begins to take on more and more of the characteristics of a suburb. These are not only important in and of themselves--in the changing income and mobility structures, for example. They are also important as the sources of the fears, doubts and concerns of community members. Many of these are focused in the idea of liberalism. Members of the community tend to fear a dissolution of the standards they have maintained and the social bonds out of which their community has been built. Parents see their control over and understanding of their children diminishing. The sphere of public--as opposed to private--activity increases, and people feel an impingement on their autonomy. With change comes a general sense of insecurity fostered by unfamiliarity. New decisions need to be made, and yet each new decision tends to create still a more 'new' situation. 'Permissiveness' is not just a new attitude producing a new situation; it is also a response to a situation in which control is impossible because knowledge is too far from complete. But the Kepler permissiveness and liberalism have become the labelled villains, because they are the shape in which these social changes reached home.

Not surprisingly, concerns of this kind are readily focused on the schools. This is in large part because they are focused on children--perhaps the most emotionally important of the many areas in which adults feel they have lost control. But parents do not simply condemn the schools for changing or for being permissive. To be sure, they complain about the latter. But they also seek quality education. Where they complain the loudest is where changes occur which are not linked to any demonstrable improvements in quality--or indeed, where

reports appear to indicate a decline in quality. Such reports have been inconclusive here as elsewhere, and even where their statistics are not in doubt, the meaning of the changes is unclear due to demographic and subject matter variations. But once reported, such news is not without its audience, or its importance to the proponents and opponents of various policies.

The challenges the community poses for education are by no means all merely elements of ideology or chimerical reactions to the cruder outlines of reports. For one thing community members' analyses of the school district have frequently been well-reasoned and accurate. Quite beyond this, however, there have been basic structural changes in the community. Kepler has increased in population by 50% since 1960 (the year the present superintendent of schools came to the community). The number and size of industrial concerns have increased, changing both the nature of the community and its tax base. And, despite the emphasis community members place on traditional order, they have been drawn more and more into the cosmopolitan world. Their very relationship to the school district shows influences of the greater vocality of community groups as a national movement. And like it or not, community members have had to submit to greater state control of education, and indeed, find it useful to seek state and federal funding for educational programs. One of the functions of growing cosmopolitanism has been an increase in expectations of the schools. More accurately, there has been a polarization. More and more people in Kepler expect their children to go on to college--especially among the newer residents. At the same time, however, the need for specific vocational training becomes stronger, as technical and skilled jobs become harder to find.

This is not just an increase in expectations of quantity or quality of education. It is an increase in expectations of diversity of education. And as we suggested above, this is a crucial issue.

Not all the demands for diversity come from the community, to be sure. Teaching must be specialized to meet curricular demands. Administration must be specialized to meet organizational and environmental demands. The complexities of grantsmanship, development, plant management, labor negotiations and public relations each require focused attention. In many cases special personnel or departments must be assigned to deal with them--just as 'General Science' has given way to chemistry, biology, geology, physics and so forth. Each component of the educational system has its own distinctive ties to the external environment and its own internal values. If it did not, it could not perform its specialized function. But the major question for the school system as such becomes "how are all these specialisms to be made into one whole?" Or, to put it another way, a crucial task of the system is to maintain integration in the face of differentiation. Before we go ont to discuss the organizational background of the school system, let us consider one more factor of the situation.

The Teachers Association has recently become an important and vocal factor in Kepler educational decision-making. This is something of a borderline case to our classification, for it is in large part external to the formal organization of school districts in the way most American education is now run (although it need not be so). Yet, of course, teachers are members of the organization more than of its environment. We have decided to treat the Teachers Association here as part of the 'situation' primarily because of the impact it

has had on school-community relations. It has, in fact, been a highly exacerbating influence on the consideration and expression of pre-exiting tensions. In the county where Kepler is located, fewer than half the workers are members of unions; there has not been a major industrial action in ten years. Feelings run high and generally hostile on the subject of collective bargaining for teachers.

Many administrators and community members feel that by acting through the Association, teachers distance themselves intentionally from school and community relations. This is particularly galling to the administrators (and some teachers) who fondly recall an earlier, more familial atmosphere. Association activities are seen as an active rejection of them personally. Additionally, the Association appears to many residents as yet another intrusion of the modernism which they find distateful. One of the effects of Teachers Association activities has been to introduce a new polarization of the community, to increase the discreteness of boundaries between 'them' and 'us.' This works in both directions. Clearly, promotion of a professional identity among teachers is a part of the Association's role and its self-identified aims. On the other hand, the introduction of a corporate identity for teachers makes them a readier collective target for complaints from the community. One of the results of this has been to embroil teachers extensively (as corporately represented by the Teachers Association) in virtually all of the decisions of the school district, whether or not they are strictly instructional. Accountability is an instance of this. Because the concept is so vague, and because notions of how to perform the accounting itself are so unclear and inadequate, it is easy for accountability to degenerate into blaming.

The Teachers Association was worried about this study, for example, in part because it was perceived as coming from the administrative side of the hierarchy, and in part because it was about accountability. The latter is viewed as a means of strengthening the hand of administrators, not of strengthening the system.

The situation in which the educational system finds itself, in sum, is a relatively chaotic one in which the entrenched interests feel threatened and newer ones neglected. Far from supporting the school district, the community tends to view it with suspicion, almost as an interloper in its midst. The defensive reactions of members of the organization--such as the formation of the Teachers Association--have tended to split the whole rather than strengthen it. The accountability system has been identified with this process, and indeed, it has proved yet another fissure in the organizational structure.

Organizational Background: We turn now from the situation of the organization to its history, constituency, and structure. Although we shall discuss organizational history here in terms of crises, it should not be thought that the background of the Kepler school district is simply an uninterrupted series of crises. Rather, it is crises that leave their mark most emphatically on the organization. During such periods, decisions are made which act as turning points, or rather, which have greater effects because they come at turning points and are thus less subject to later reversal. A crisis comes as an established way of doing things begins to crumble. Inventions and innovations (which are in fact always occurring at some rate) which come into play at this period stand a much greater chance of utilization. Long periods

of stability have been rare in recent educational history. In addition, their relevance to the present organizational structure is not as great. It comes in two ways. First, it is the crises which break up a stable functioning order which are the most important, and the most dramatic. Secondly, periods of stability are often looked back to as a sort of mythological period in the organizational past--much the way that Kepler treats its 'pre-cosmopolitan' days. In this capacity, as part of the organizational culture, they form a kind of ideal--inasmuch as any of their characteristics are remembered. When people think of what would make a 'good' or even a stable system, they do not approach the problem in completely new ways. Rather, they look first to what they understand of the past.

Many of the influential crises in Kepler's educational past are closely related to the transition in the nature of the community described above. In the early years of this transition, the community maintained a relatively uninterested stance. The school district administration went ahead with a number of innovations, in large part following the leads of state and federal governments and educational authorities. Among these were open education, increased self-determination for students, and new organizational structures allowing for participatory decision-making. Kepler became a leader in innovation (and the receipt of funding from experimental programs) among New Salem's rural school districts. As we have noted, however, the products of these innovations were not in the end always positively received by all organization and community members. Many thought that the construction of the High School resembled a factory, and that its academic environment had generally deteriorated. The increase

in dependence on outside funds also helped to 'set the community up' for a crisis when those funds were reduced (which happened as we shall see).

One of the major symbols (and by no means inaccurately so) of the drive for excellence through experimentation in Kepler was the opening of the Webster School. One reason this developed into a crisis is that Webster appeared a favored child in comparison with the Byron School, which was not the recipient of comparable funding, attention and privileges, but which had been in the community much longer. This split helped to polarize the new and old members of the community, those who looked respectively forward and backward in their views of educational ideals. There is also a split among teachers regarding Webster. Its effects have been in one sense to further a sort of administraive 'divide and conquer' policy, whether or not consciously intended. At the same time, the increase in insecurity which it has brought has contributed to the growing importance of the Teachers Association. The split seems to have the better of unifying factors at present, but this is not a stable arrangement.

The conflicts which the Webster/Byron split has produced within the elementary schools are matched by the crisis experienced a few years ago regarding the High School. Prior to this time, Kepler had an agreement to accept students from a neighboring community into Kepler High School. Eventually, however, the feeder community built its own high school and terminated its arrangement with Kepler. This resulted in a loss of more than 400 students and proportionate funds. This in turn meant that several teaching positions had to be terminated. This crisis might be described as something of a wedge driven into the relatively paternalistic substance of Kepler's

earlier administration-teacher relations. Though it weathered the storm, doubt had begun to set in about the extent to which it was safe to sustain the old relationship of dependence.

This crises came to be abbreviated R.I.F. in the community. Whether this was accepted necssary 'reduction in force' was an indication of which side of the controversy one identified with. There was considerable question as to whether the drop in 'sender student' enrollment justified letting twenty-two teachers go. The superintendent had originally suggested that new jobs would materialize. His promises as to the extent of this were not met to the satisfaction of the Teachers Association. The community felt that the TA's response was unrealistic--and so it went. The relative harmony of the Kepler School System had been intruded upon by the dissonance of mistrust. In essence, a dependence group (see Chapter III, above) had had its trust in its leader violated. It was not--and has not yet come to--the point of actual rebellion. But the old structure of dependence is clearly not working. It is interesting to note that this is largely how the superintendent himself saw the situation:

> In the past fifteen years I have never failed to support every teacher. It was 'Daddy Williams' will take care of you. But this time I said, 'You're on your own.' It was a big mistake. It [organization] needs a warm figure, someone who makes people feel very safe and secure and comfortable.

This in itself perhaps reveals an accurate overview of the constituency of the Kepler School System. Kepler had not (until very recently) succeeded in attracting a great many very forceful personalities, with a drive for either responsibility or the opportunity for

expression of initiative. But it did have one strong and dynamic figure. This individual was willing to assume responsibility--even responsibility for the emotions of his subordinates (to an extent). He rose through the ranks to become superintendent. But the situation changed. In the first place, it became difficult for the reasons we have outlined to provide sentient security anymore, no matter how effective an administration one might run. Second, more and more of Kepler's teachers were coming to have some desire for autonomy and self-determination. The complexion had changed--without anyone really noticing. This didn't matter so much until an incident brought it out. Then, the change appeared as catastrophic.

In some ways the organizational structure predisposed it to this sort of sudden change. It was not (and is not) a structure of intermediate associations. Rather, there is a small central administration and a large number of relatively equal (and equally distant) lower level members in the various schools. This need not necessarily inhibit communication of a fairly formal nature, but it does interfere with the sort of communication on which expectations are built. It means that as the administration formulates plans (or the subordinates formulate responses) chances for informally testing the responses of others are not readily available. More than this, however, the structure means that realistic perceptions across the 'great divide' are difficult. The senior leaders are always somewhat distant, which means that they can be either exaggeratedly deified or denigrated. It is possible for there to be considerable change at lower levels before the central administration is aware of it. Problems of this kind are accentuated when lower level supervisors

are given relatively little discretion. No one at intermediate level is able to adequately cater to the particular needs of his special group, and so all are forced to participate in general solutions, and general complaints.

The System: The Kepler schools identified seven features to 'Project Change,' their accountability system, when it was introduced. These seven were 1) a planning system, 2) individualization of instruction, 3) community involvement in planning, 4) comprehensive pupil achievement testing, diagnosis and prescription, 5) school unit instructional teams, 6) program budgeting, and 7) computer-faciliated district and pupil information systems. These 'features' are not equal in scope, and certainly attention was not divided equally among them. Further, only some of these features could really be considered elements of an accountability system, however defined. "Individualization of instruction" is simply a pedagogical choice of policy. It is neither produced nor required by 'accountability systems,' nor does it contribute directly to the process of accounting. The link of individualization of instruction and accountability shows, rather, the common ideological foundations of the two concepts, at least in Kepler. The entire scheme is an attempt to bring together diversification and increased control. But, as we have indicated, these two variables are more opposed than correlated.

The planning system implemented by Kepler is entirely teacher-focused. That is, it does not consider planning for organizational improvement at all levels. It is concerned with student performance as its main object, and teacher planning, effort and evaluation as the means to this end. Cost accounting efforts are conceived of

solely as relating student costs to student achievement. Student costs are conceived in terms of what goes on in individual classrooms, of instructional strategies. Larger composite units of the organization and their integration are not subject to equal consideration. This means that the planning system is really a focus on short-term goals concerning individual students, not an attempt to reconsider larger and longer term issues in order to design the most effective school district.

Community involvement in planning has been confined primarily to the goal setting stage. Despite frequent comments concerning the aim of involving the "total community" in "determining and sustaining a planning model," the model appears to have been designed and chosen by the central administration, with community discussion of which goals were most important--not which means were most suited. One result of this is that only certain central office administrators have any sense of ownership of or real involvement in the planning and accountability program. This is particularly evident in the computer-based activities of the system. These tend to be entirely elaborate information control systems, only tangentially related to sustained planning efforts. Such relation as they have to accountability is simply keeping track of performance records--student grades, teacher reports, unit cost figures, etc.

A great deal of the Kepler system appears to be simply the renaming of existing processes, the incorporation of certain new instructional techniques, and the elaboration of records concerning just how teaching is done, and, within certain parameters, how effectively. None of these processes is necessarily useless, and some

appear to have had important beneficial products. But none of them constitutes either an integrated planning system or what we have called a program of system-accountability. Rather than holding what goes on to account, Project Change is concerned to count what goes on. It is a label under which educational administrators at the most senior levels have grouped a number of heterogenous changes they wished to institute. Its integration is rather chimerical. Calling the project an accountability measure seems an attempt to meet demands for community participation in and monitoring of education at the same time that the project's "sales appeal" is increased by attaching it to a popular administrative ideology.

The belief that renaming something changes it substantially is a rather primitive feature of much mythological thinking--and obviously not limited to technologically 'primitive' societies. It is strikingly evident in the comment (made in a "technical brief" on Project Change) that "Teachers, via Comprehensive Achievement Monitoring (CAM), and Student Achievement Mastery (SAM) testing have become 'facilitators of the instructional process.'" Exactly what difference this is intended to indicate it is difficult to discern. To some extent, the innovations in information processing claimed for Project Change may be reduced to further instances of renaming. When carried out comprehensively, this is a valuable exercise. It helps to ensure that the categories used are adequate and overlapping. This benefit seems to have resulted somewhat from the Kepler effort. In particular a clearer definition has been achieved of exactly what the role of testing is in the system and what is to be done with the information gathered in the testing process.

In general, the elaboration of record-keeping systems is a useful organizational change. It works indirectly to see to it that people are explicit in making decisions and following them up. Unfortunately, these indirect effects are perhaps the most substantial impact record-keeping facilities have on the important planning and decisional aspects of accountability. All too often--and Keppler is far from an exception--information processing is substituted for the use of the information gathered. The amount of paper generated by such systems--whether in longhand or printout--is not just an annoyance to those who have to deal with it, it is a positive administrative handicap. Administrators do not require an infinite amount of information, however infinite the horizons of their planning may be. Rather they require a moderate amount of usable information. Where they are confronted with an enormous mass of undigested data in the name of empirical evidence, they are apt to make decisions based directly on value premises because there is no way they can bring such information directly to bear. This is why, in any adequate accountability system, extensive attention must be given to the eventual use of information gathered; how it is to be grouped will influence its impact. More than this, the system must include means of presenting senior administrators with preliminary analyses rather than undigested data. Administrators confronted with over-centralized accountability systems are likely to find that they have lost the ability to delegate decision-making to intermediate levels. In the first place, the intermediate levels may gradually disappear--being replaced by those who administer the accountability system itself. Where the same people still hold the same offices, however, they are

less likely to accept equal responsibility when their proportionate control of information is decreased. They will feel that if "the central office has the facts, the central office should make the decision."

Unfortunately, there is the further (and predictable) problem with the emphasis on record keeping that evaluation tends to supersede planning in the use of the accountability system. The fears of teachers in this regard appear to far exceed any reality--but the reality is not absent. And the fears are provoked by the real skewing of emphases in the system; they do not originate out of thin air. At the same time, the fact that more and more decision-making and responsibility is being centralized means that central office administrators will feel more and more need for control. The desire for evaluative records is likely to be accelerated. The psychological needs of the administrator are for control over his distant operatives--not immediately for any reevaluation of the system. The latter, in fact, tends to be seen as threatening, for two reasons. First, it appears as a criticism of the central office, for the faults of the system cannot be traced to more specific actors. Secondly, changing the entire system would only further weaken the administrator's already debilitated sense of understanding and control.

Kepler has incorporated Individually Guided Education-Multi-Unit School (IGE/MUS) procedures into its elementary programming along with the overall accountability effort. This is itself useful, and fits directly into the spirit of accountability to increase organizational 'consciousness.' It helps with the latter because it has teachers select instructional strategies on the basis of

partially defined instructional objectives. This overcomes two common problems. First, it means that teachers will be working for explicit purposes, and not vague ones. Second, it means that they can be evaluated (partially) in relation to these purposes, so that there should be no disagreement over the grounds of measurement and performance. The particular implementation in Kepler suffered, however, through inadequate attention to the training and assistance of teachers in using the new tools, and an overestimation of the extent to which the leap from objectives to strategies is automatic or inherent. IGE/MUS did, it seems, help to increase the parity between Webster and Byron schools--as it was quite successful in the latter.

Various kinds of technological innovations were also described by the Kepler School District as part of Project Change, although they had nothing to do with accountability. These included Technology for Children, "resource centers," TV monitors, new and different materials and multiple media approaches and so forth. Most of these innovations share with IGE/MUS an apparent primary purpose of pleasing parents, and doing so in the name of individualized instruction. The success of this attempt is beyond the scope of this study, though we may note that individualized instruction is a popular educational ideology, not as fully disseminated or desired outside the community of professional educators. To choose it as a way to please parents is thus on the surface surprising--especially given the anti-liberal bias of the Kepler community. IGE/MUS does provide, however, for frequent parent-teacher sessions which are intended to help to set and revise goals for the child. These goals are to become part of the continued assessment program envisioned under Project Change. Thus

far, however, it appears that the goals are of necessity quite standardized. How much this reflects the similarity of parents' desires, and how much the needs of the system is unclear. It is important to realize that parents are not the only relevant community members. Many of the people who will evaluate Kepler's schools with an eye toward funding, for example, will not do so on the basis of specific experiences with specific children. The progress of the whole will be their concern.

It is not hard to see, given the heterogeneity of innovations which Kepler calls Project Change, why a majority of professional members of the school district could not accurately identify the accountability system when they were questioned. Many were able to indicate who ran it, but not how or to what purpose. This is perhaps the most striking evidence possible as to the weakness of the implementation effort.

Implementation: The Kepler School District did not formulate any comprehensive plan for the introduction of Project Change to the members of the organization. Certain elements were ignored altogether; others were implemented piecemeal. This reflects the district's general assumption that accountability was and is a technical matter, to be implemented in the most technically efficient way, and to succeed or fail on technical grounds. Although particular individuals, including the superintendent and Project Change Director, did at times give attention to the personal and social issues raised by the system, there was no overall effort to deal with these.

The implementation (like the selection of system) proceeded very much from the top of the organization downward. It was pushed rapidly and without much deliberation on both school board and professional staff alike. This was despite the fact that it was presented as a tool for teacher and community control. The superintendent went to each school to promote the PPB aspects of Project Change. He told teachers that, though it would cost them considerable effort, it would give them greater educational and personal self-determination. They would be able, he indicated, to control budgetary allocations which affected them. This implied that Project Change was to be theirs, in some sense, yet they were not given the chance either to choose or control it. As it turned out, they also did not understand it adequately. The reason most commonly given for this is simply that people were pushed too fast.

A further problem, accentuated by the rapidity of implementation, has been the complexity of Change. It's computer aspects are elaborate, threatening, and demanding in terms of time and procedures. Many teachers and some administrators saw Project Change as largely a means for its director to complete his doctoral dissertation. System members demanded a flexibility which such a complex and abstract system was not prepared to yield them. The self-study carried out at one school really became more of a legitimating than a creative exercise. The goals of the individual director became confused with the goals of the implementation and the capabilities of the system. The whole identification of the implementation as a 'one-man show' was a major problem. It reduced the sense of ownership which other

members of the district could feel for the Project. In addition, the director became defensive about its operation, and loathe to accept comments and suggestions. The 'paper' functioning of the system assumed much too great an importance.

On several specific occasions central office administrators went out to individual schools to discuss the project. These meetings often proved effective in generating support, especially where the administrator met with a small group or even individual classes. The meetings held at the County level did not have the same beneficial consequences. At the very least they were too large to allow for effective discussion as opposed to simple speech-making.

For the most part, Project Change seemed to be 'accepted' by teachers but never understood. They saw something happening and rather than disagree, they were simply left hanging because the implementation was so vague. It was a though the whole system could run without them--except that they had to fill in a lot of forms. This, of course, became a great bone of contention. Interestingly though, the factor which most differentiates teachers' responses is consciousness of locating learning objectives. Those already engaged in this effort were the least reistant. The point to be emphasized here is the importance of consistency or continuity in tasks and sentient formations alike. Having groups split up and having tasks changed, both produced resistance.

Comment: The implementation of an accountability system in Kepler coincided with other crises, including the loss of students and reduction in teaching staff at the high school. Because it was vague in its introduction to the district, in its overall purposes,

and in its lumping together of heterogenous techniques, it has increased the sense of indeterminateness it sought to reduce. The organization of the Kepler School District was centered--especially emotionally--on a single charismatic and paternal leader. In earlier years this leader had been able to bring a good deal of modernization to Newton through his personal leadership. Recently, however, his ability to provide the security which justified his control to members has weakened. The indeterminateness of the system at the same time makes more control appear necessary to those in the central office, and makes such control resented by those on the line.

As a result, teachers do not feel that the accountability system either serves their needs or directly contributes to the educational effort in any way that they can see. Rather, it appears as a tool of control and a burden of paperwork and aimless record-keeping. The hostility of teachers is seen as rebellious non-cooperation by administrators, or perhaps even more often as the result of ignorance. Yet, precisely because teachers are viewed in this manner, steps have not been taken to make them feel a sense of participation in the accountability effort. It would seem that this is due to two factors: First, the administration identifies a "them-us" situation in which it must attempt to control the teachers using accountability. Second, the administration, because of its consciousness of the impossibility of its situation, is hostile to any outside suggestions for system reform. It wishes to own the accountability tool, rather than let that tool work on the system itself. System accountability does not exist within the framework of Project Change, or other formal engagement mechanisms in Kepler.

Change can become the source of further tension in Kepler, or it can function, as intended, for greater integration. A crucial variable in deciding which will happen is the extent to which Change, as a task system, can become congruent with the sentient system of the organization. As it is, groups which are defined as having common responsibility for certain tasks are split into conflicting sub-units or hampered by confusion over their boundaries. Where common responsibility crosses lines of sentient identification, it becomes difficult for groups and individuals to assess each other's points of view, motivations, and interpretations of the situation. Past traumas such as the "RIF" crisis tend to increase members' sense of dependence on sentient attachments at the same time that they discredit certain sentient identifications. Those that remain strong are doubly important. Even where this has not promoted feelings of distrust as such, it has exacerbated feelings of distance. Thus each side views the other as though it operated according to a different set of rules; indeed each side evaluates the other <u>by</u> a different set of rules. This can only increase the sense of uncertainty in the organization. The result of such uncertainty is to shorten the time span over which people plan, to make them more concerned to defend their immediate positions and less willing to work for long-term changes, benefits or goals. In psychoanalytic terms, the uncertainty of the environment produces regression to more and more generalized and thus crude responses.

An accountability system <u>should</u> be designed to do the opposite. As we have noted, Change suffers from some design flaws in its

emphasis on record-keeping and purely post hoc analysis. But this problem is also accentuated by the definition and presentation of Change in the organization as a purely task-oriented system. It is, of course, not possible to completely separate the task from the sentient aspects of organization, so what this means is simply that attention is paid to the former, and the latter are left to accident. So far, the accidents have gotten Kepler into a difficult situation. It must turn its extensive energies back into the organization, must achieve an element of congruency between the emotional roots of these energies and the demands of a task system. The latter cannot exist as a superstructure divorced from a sentient infrastructure.

Chapter VI

ACCOUNTABILITY IN PLACE OF LEADERSHIP: CASE STUDY TWO

New Westfield is an urban school district with all the complex problems which that implies. Its financial situation has deteriorated in recent years; the demography of its community has been transformed; the characteristics and tone of the educational institutions and their members have changed. No one is certain any more where the district is headed. For most, the only thing they are sure about is that they won't (and don't) like it. Change is seen by most educators in New Westfield more as a defeat than as a challenge. Yet, in many concrete ways New Westfield leads the state school districts. One of the key problems the district must deal with now is this disparity. In the recent past, it has operated on the assumption that material and technical changes would always lead the way. This may be why the people have dragged their feet.

Accountability as a formal program came to New Westfield somewhat after the peak of its first wave of national popularity. But, it still came among the programs in which accountability was thought of primarily as a tool to improve teaching performance, that is, as an educational rather than a fiscal tool. The "Educational Reform Program" was the innovation of a new superintendent who came into the district as a highly symbol-laden figure in the midst of a tense situation. That superintendent resigned under pressure last year. The history of the accountability system is thus closely tied to his career in New Westfield. Unfortunately for both superintendent and accountability

system, however, many influential educational and community figures saw them as ways not to confront issues but to avoid them. Ultimately, for all its various virtues and faults, formal accountability exists in New Westfield in place of real leadership.

The Situation: Almost every participant's description of change in the New Westfield schools is focused on the issue of race. It is the fact that the majority of the professional staff of the district are white and the community more and more black which makes educators regard change, as we said above, "more as a defeat than as a challenge." The change in student population has been very rapid, the recognition of it perhaps even more sudden. The considerable majority of students in the district are black; over 90% of the high school students are. Many teachers are pessimistic about what can be accomplished with these students. It would be bad enough, they feel, for the standards of the district to simply fall, and for their jobs to become more difficult in the process. But, coupled with this, the new accountability system appears to hold them responsible for what the students learn. They fear their performance will be judged on the basis of that of students for whom they have little respect. To be sure, this is not the attitude of all teachers, and even those whose thinking it characterizes accurately are not as crude as the statement makes them sound. But the problem is real.

By traditional standards, student 'quality' does indeed appear to have declined. The causes of this are varied and unascertainable. Certainly the many advantages which middle-class students have give them an advantage in attaining this elusive characteristic 'quality,'

and more and more middle-class white parents (not to mention upper-class) are sending their children to private schools. This does not only deprive the district of students who might perform well on tests and/or offer something to classes. It represents a very clear-cut slap in the face to the district, a too tangible vote of no-confidence in its capabilities. The students and the schools are both blamed for 'declining standards'; somehow the community itself is never blamed. By this we do not just refer to that former community which brought about the problems, we refer to the community which now must face them, but tries not to.

The community, of course, is not a monolithic structure. And, in fact, it is unclear just 'who' the community is. When we use the term we refer to two only partially overlapping conceptions. The first is the primarily political structure of pressure groups and concerted action vis-a-vis the schools. The second is the set of social relations which underly the public and private lives of members. Both of these have changed in New Westfield, but since the former depends on conscious organization, it has largely lagged behind the latter. In other words, the political structure has changed more slowly than the social structure. Or, perhaps, more accurately, it has changed equally rapidly, but more suddenly, after a considerable delay. As yet, it has not changed as much. And people's conceptions of the political structure have in many cases lagged behind the reality. The citizens of New Westfield are aware of this structural instability, but opinions differ as to just where the balance of power rests. As far as the schools are concerned, the strength of the older political elite is augmented by support from within the system. The bulk of teachers, although not

overtly politicized, tend to share a conception of the proper educational situation and process with this pressure group. The newer political movements--for example, those representing most black citizens --have been unable to establish as much concerted pressure for other than ephemeral incidents.

The result of this unstable political alignment during the period of our study was a policy of inactive compromise. The accountability system and the superintendent both fitted into this policy by appearing to be major changes, major confrontations with the issues; but both were really changes at the top only, not throughout the system. The district submitted to them but didn't really collaborate with either. We are not suggesting here that this role was consciously planned by political leaders of any faction or by an administrative body. Rather, we argue that these were gestures made in response to consciously perceived needs, but without unconscious, sentient support. Further, the new superintendent was expected to be in himself a solution to problems, not to lead the exploration for such a solution. The accountability system too was expected to bring rationality and efficiency at once, not to bring the information necessary to new plans and new politices. It was to be an answer, not a means of answering. The school district was challenged on so many fronts that it did not see any need to add to the precariousness of its situation.

We have already described in earlier chapters some of the reasons for the inertia or built-in conservatism of sentient systems. Only in a highly secure and stable situation do people find it relatively easy to experiment with their sentient relations. In many ways what New Westfield did, accidentally, with its accountability system was to introduce

a sentient change at a time when sentient relations were already under tremendous strain. Sometimes this is necessary, but it requires considerable planning and care. The reasons that New Westfield failed to realize what it was doing in this sense are, of course, not all peculiar to it. In part, it was swept along on a uncritical wave of enthusiasm for accountability--more as ideology than as concrete organizational reality. It took accountability at face value as a purely formal system--as did nearly everyone else. And in fact, within the constraints of these problems, New Westfield did a good job of it. The system was straightforward, and it was attempting to tackle real problems.

Certain other aspects of the situation in which accountability came to New Westfield need to be mentioned. Some of these are nationwide shifts which occurred here as elsewhere--people began to lose faith in education as a means of social mobility. Or, perhaps mobility, assimilation, ceased to be such a dominant goal of various 'underclass' communities. The ideology of a culturally plural society had appeal to many in New Westfield, and at the same time it was rejected by many on both sides of ethnic divisions. A number of blacks, in fact, criticized the black superintendnent, on his arrival, for his advocacy of regionalization, a movement to link the inner-city New Westfield district with its suburban (and more white) neighbors. It should not be thought, either, that all complaints of falling standards--either academic or behavioral--come from middle-class whites. In the late sixties and early seventies black children often bewildered and disturbed their parents as much as did white kids. And parents of all backgrounds tended to focus their disgruntlement with this state of affairs largely on the schools.

It was not just a matter of bewilderment or general disapproval though. Disciplinary problems of various kinds were seen to be a source of lost learning time and of perceived falling standards. In their more extreme forms, they actually cost the district money in maintenance and in extra staff costs for extended supervision. And perceived (and sometimes exaggerated) behavioral problems certainly figured prominently in the transfers to private schools and the moves to the suburbs. As an issue, discipline has come to further separate school and community opinion, since each tends to put the blame for the problem on the other.

A further issue in New Westfield's situation is its growing dependence on outside policy-making bodies for support. This is partly a function of its own changing constitution, and partly of the changing educational situation nationwide. With court and administrative decisions such as those aimed at reducing inequality, state and federal agencies have become responsible for a greater proportion of educational management. But the process predates this, stemming also from the post-Sputnick era's 'pursuit of excellence' and the innovations of the 1960's. These led to new mandates from communities in some cases, but in almost all cases they made new funding sources available. Thus, if a district did not want to lose out on monies for experimentation and innovation, it needed to focus its attention on a new set of 'institutional consumers'--state and federal government agencies. Their introduction not only further split the audience to which local education was playing, but added an element of fiscal uncertaintly. Federal funds could be important, but they could not be counted on (or should not have been) in long-term planning. In many cases they were officially designated as seed monies; in other cases, though, it was easier to

develop an illusion that they would always continue to be provided. The cutback in these funds with the economic recession of the early seventies helped to turn an insecure situation into a crisis. At the same time, the changing tax base of the community and the increasing costs of education had made outside sources of funds even more important. The result of all this is not so much a lack of funds as a lack of control over them. In addition, the funding agencies demand certain appearances of order, and are not generally investing in fundamental changes, but in specific programs. The accountability system provided, on paper, a coordination of all these programs. It also, for a moment, provided the illusion that basic changes could be smoothly, formally, and painlessly instituted.

So, it was amid racial conflicts and community mistrust, in a rapidly changing situation with a new superintendent of schools, that an accountability system was first formally implemented in New Westfield. Neither educators nor any substantial segment of the community rallied around the superintendent in time to give the system real support. Unable to sustain any positive course of actions, the factions appeared equally unable to reach a compromise. The accountability system, which was to make educational goals and procedures explicit and rational, became rather an illusory layer of paper responsiveness over the conflicts and dug-in-heels of sentient groups.

Organizational Background: The racial problems of 1967-1968-1969 are a focal point in the organizational history of the New Westfield schools. This eruption of hostilities has come to symbolize tensions which have existed both before and after it in more equilibrious

fashion. One of the most popular complaints linked to these tensions is that student discipline--particularly at the high school--is poor. The high school school, as we shall see further below, has become in some ways the scapegoat institution of the district, manifesting in more extreme form problems which also occur elsewhere. High school personnel tend to feel victimized as well. Teachers gripe about having to spend large proportions of their time engaged in 'disciplinary' activities almost as much as parents and community members complain that they don't do so enough. This area seems, in fact, to provide another instance of a community problem being symbolically located in the schools. The change in behavioral patterns of youth is, of course, widespread and not limited to educational institutions. School-age children do, however, spend a large proportion of their waking hours in school, and are there confronted with a variety of exciting and sometimes upsetting stimuli. One factor, of course, in the current flare-up of disciplinary problems is the fact that 90% of the high school students are black while only a small percentage of teachers are. As every teacher knows, discipline is not a purely objective relationship of control--it depends on a collaborative relationship between teacher and student. This dimension of understanding is markedly absent--in both directions. Teachers tend to feel that they can continue teaching as they have always done, because a student is a student, biology is biology, or whatever. High school students, on the other hand, are everywhere anxious to assert their individual and/or collective identities and choose often to do so in confrontation with authority figures. These confrontations are not always direct, and are not always identified directly with underlying issues. Thus

students may confront teachers with 'active inattention,' focused so as to annoy the teacher, but still leaving him the out, unfortunately of ascribing it to laziness or stupidity.

Following the racial conflicts of the late sixties, New Westfield suffered a series of setbacks to its public image and concrete circumstances. Its service image and reputation for quality sank, and remains fairly low, both among educators and the general community. Some community members told researchers that real estate salespeople warned them away from New Westfield specifically on account of the schools. Related to this, the school lost what many members perceived as an 'opportunity' for regionalization. Others, of course, saw this as a 'threat.' Several leaders seemed to feel that this would result in a relationship of 'exploitation of the big by the small.' Others feared simply the loss of their personal power. The blacks of the community were largely aligned against regionalization because they saw it as stemming from a notion that a school system which was predominantly black would not be effective, and therefore New Westfield needed middle-class white children. In the course of this dispute, Richmond, a wealthier and whiter area, terminated its sending/receiving relationship with New Westfield. This had immediate fiscal impacts (although not proportionate to those we described in Keppler in the last chapter) but its major ultimate impact was on educational goals. The loss of Richmond marked a crucial downward turn in the district's self-esteem. The feeling of hopelessness with which many teachers regard their pupils had been remarked upon by the superintendent, among others. Now it was being reaffirmed, and extended to the whole educational system by an outside body.

It was at this juncture that John Phillips replaced an interim superintendent as the chief executive officer of the New Westfield School District. He came into the system in the midst of severe crisis. He was chosen in part because it was thought that as a black he would smooth over community/school conflicts, but the black community distrusted him because of his advocacy of regionalization. Many educators (including blacks) distrusted him because he came from Harvard and Columbia, was clearly a member of the elite with an educational background which theirs could not rival. Very shortly after his arrival, without having built up any extensive base of power or acceptance in the district, he began to institute a sweeping program of reforms.

All of these reforms were implemented from the top down, bypassing the communication, planning and administrative networks which already existed in the district. This created a severe and problematic split between the central office and the schools, between top-level and middle-management. School principals, on whom ultimate responsibility for their schools rested, and who had previously been pretty much able to do as they pleased internally, found themselves being deprived of their traditional authority. Much of their power was transferred to a newly created Director's Group, composed of those in charge of different topically defined areas. Elementary school principals, in particular, felt their administrations impinged on, since in their case, less than in middle and high schools, subject-areas give way to more integrated group-structures. The feeling of district members was expressed well in the lament of one who said that the superintendent had members of the Director's Group report directly to him, while principals had to report to his (newly hired) administrative assistant.

In time, however, it became clear that extensive and substantive program changes could not be effected without the participation and collaboration of the principals.

In the original formulation of the Educational Reform Program, the principals were asked to handle in-service training. At least one administrator suggests that in this the principals were being asked to do something they couldn't. And one reason they couldn't is that they themselves were given no extensive training in the new accountability system, only half understood it, and knew still less of implementation procedures. These were worked out by the instructional council (Director's Group) and the superintendent, and handed down, as a package, at a general meeting. The emphasis on centralization, however, is structural, not just a matter of personalities (as is apparent from the organization chart appended to the Case Study, Appendix 2 below).

Communication channels in the district are in general unclear. One partial reason for this is that the tendency of the superintendent to split the authority of those below him leaves no one person responsible for carrying a program through. It is thus often difficult for members to ascertain just what their fellows are doing. Without a structure of intermediate levels of authority and action, there is no ready way to translate the decisions of the upper strata into practice. In some ways one can see that the accountability system was intended to substitute for this level of administrative leadership. These intermediates were the structural opponents of the superintendent's authority as he entered the district. He attempted in various ways to circumvent them, and when the accountability system was implemented, it had the line levels reporting directly to the center, on

standardized forms, with the principals performing only an auxiliary function. Interestingly, when we asked district members whether they felt dissatisfaction with their work-units, the two which responded that they did in any proportion were the high school and the central office--the two units split for different reasons away from the bulk of the district. Their isolation seems to make a considerable difference.

The centralization of planning and administrative apparatus, as it were, means that there is less administration to go around. In other words, a few people cannot be everywhere, cannot talk to everyone. This may help to explain why, although most members were content with the amount of supervision they received, almost two and a half times as many wanted more than wanted less. This is surprising to those who have listened both to teachers in many different settings, almost always jealous of their independence, and to those who have looked at the statements of the Teachers Association in New Westfield, where a fear of oversupervision for evaluative purposes figured prominently in the opposition to the accountability program. These figures, then, highlight the insecurity of the school system. Providing this kind of supervision is the traditional function of the principal, but he cannot do so effectively if he is outside the main line of overall administration. For exactly the same reasons, giving more responsibility back to the principals might alleviate the complaints we heard (from 55% of the members) that they are seldom or never consulted about changes to be made which affect their jobs. If this consultation is to be transferred to subject-area chairmen, the overall organization of the school district would have to be changed much

more drastically than it has been, providing the same sort of intermediate and localized administrative support through alternative channels. The Director's Group is too centralized to be a replacement.

We have heard contradictory complaints, then: On the one hand that supervision and evaluation have become more close and constraining, that teachers feel threatened; on the other hand that there is not enough administrative support and effective supervision. Both complaints seem to us to stem from the same changes in who is supervising and with what aims. The highly centralized operation of the school district has left a gap in the vitally important middle-management sector--that sector of the administration with which people have the most to do.

The System: The Educational Reform Program is primarily a curricular system designed to standardize teaching. Teachers are required to achieve written objectives. Each student is rated on the completion of objectives set for him. Traditional grading is not used. Individualization is thus seen ideologically as a good. This, however, comes into active conflict with the overall principle of standardization. Some community members have, in fact, complained that accountability brought standardization, not individualization, for they understood that the reverse was the aim.

As we noted above, the ERP does concern itself primarily with educational, not fiscal, goals. In this it represents a considerable step forward from many systems. It still, however, incorporates the common over-emphasis on evaluative functions at the expense of planning. To the extent that it has taken planning directly as an object of

accountability in practice (rather than as an incidental strategy of implementation) it has been concerned with the setting of objectives. It has not focused on the organization or reorganization of the personnel and groups--the system--in which these objectives are sought. Yet it has brought various changes in both task and sentient organization in its wake. Not least among these, it has, by the means it chose for increasing parent/teacher collaboration made the staff exposed as individuals to public scrutiny. This increases the sense of vulnerability--especially where identification with the public in question is weak.

The official description of the accountability system distinguishes five components:

1. Districtwide listing of learning objectives as authorized by the superintendent for every subject, grade level, and building.
2. Development of a comprehensive planning structure for the implementation of learning units.
3. A three-level in-service training program with each teacher spending seven hours monthly or seventy hours yearly. The levels are:
   a) A monthly districtwide meeting to introduce the next topic, including training in the writing of each part of the accountability system.
   b) Bi-monthly meetings in each building.
   c) Small-group drill exercises.
4. Formal evaluation of teachers and administrators based on demonstration of ability and skills related to the learning units. The superintendent has developed his own instruments for this, in addition to evaluation done under the auspices of the State Department of Education specifying tasks, instrument, and timetable.
5. Changes in the grading and reporting system; i.e., report cards, course credit, and standard curriculum. This too will be continually evaluated throughout the district.

The stated objectives of the accountability system are:

1. To increase student achievement as evaluated by the battery of pre- and post-criterion reference tests and the attainment of learning objectives as reported on student report cards.
2. To determine the quality of accountability implementation by assessing the reliability of procedures and forms.
3. To assess attitudinal change of students and staff.

Two of the three objectives reported by the superintendent thus are in the domain of self-analysis. That is, they are designed to assure the continual renewal of the accountability effort, to see that it improves its techniques with experience. But there are two peculiarities to this. First, the means to these evaluations have entirely to do with technical and attitudinal measures. They assume that there is some correct way of doing this, some clear situation toward which the district must work, and which can be identified wholly in advance. They do not allow for change in conditions to be discovered and thus necessitate change in objectives or fundamental assumptions.

The second peculiarity is even more fundamental a problem. The ERP has no subsidiary objectives related to the organization. It is perceived as having entirely to do with an abstracted quality 'achievement,' produced by an equally abstracted 'instruction.' But instruction takes place in and is very largely determined by an institutional context. We have in early chapters already described the fundamental impact which an attempted shift toward individualization must have on sentient structure. This is true of New Westfield as well, although with the difference that the sentient structure was much stronger and better able to fight against its disruption. All the more reason that any really effective program of instructional change would have to take

account of such organizational factors. It is true that the thrust toward individualization is not as strong in the ERP as in many accountability programs, but it is still present. It is also true that in many instances teachers were asked to work together in grade-level or subject-area groupings, to re-examine subject matter/content, cognitive skills and instructional strategies, and to organize learning experiences so that each pupil would accomplish a specified increment of learning for each period of school attendance. The individualization was more instructional than organizational--although with such important exceptions as the undermining of the school as an organizational unit and the devolution of parent/school relations onto teachers as individuals. Still many of the patterns (good and bad alike) of the sentient organization were (and are) less formal than grade level and subject area. If one wishes to change a task structure, one must take account of these informal patterns (and leave room for some adaptation or formation of new ones) not only deal with formal task descriptions and personnel categories. Doing this, as New Westfield in some part did, amounts to expecting the school district to be a purely formal organization. It constitutes an excessive belief in the power of the word, thinking that things will change just because they have new names, because they are told to be different. One must explicitly set out to change a sentient structure if one wants to make sure that it will support a new task structure which one has planned.

The key element in the ERP is the learning unit which we have mentioned above. This sub-unit (Behavior Oriented Learning Units Program) of the overall effort is in line with its general management-by-objectives conceptualization. Each learning unit is a paper con-

struct divided formally into seven parts, which are sequentially ordered:

1. The Pretest, which determines where the pupil is in terms of stage objectives.
2. The Preface, which integrates and summarizes the general objectives.
3. The Content/Process Outline, which is a sequential listing of the material the unit covers.
4. The Cognitive Processes, which identify the specific thinking skills the student will develop in order to solve the problems presented in the unit.
5. The Specific Objectives, which are statements written in behavioral and measurable terms describing what the student will be able to do as a result of the instruction received.
6. The Instructional Methods and Activities, which are a description of the methods and techniques used by teachers to individualize instruction.
7. The Post-Test, which measures the student's content achievement and process usage at the close of a specific learning unit.

A wide range of tests have been used for different objectives--both standardized tests (such as the California Achievement Tests) and new tests created by the system. It is important to note the strong emphasis on content learning and on measurable objectives. This means that a number of traditional educational goals must either be left out of such a scheme or reduced to purely attitudinal questions of dubious validity. The New Westfield program has followed the latter course wherever possible, as with questions aimed at ascertaining whether students have learned to appreciate learning and will continue to take advantage of educational opportunities throughout their lives.

One of the complaints which a number of teachers and administrators voiced about the ERP was that objectives had been changed many times. Since the overall objectives have not undergone many changes

of any significance, it is somewhat difficult to be sure whether this refers to specific objectives or to the translation of overall objectives into administrative rulings. We suspect that the problem comes with the various meetings of grade-level and subject-area personnel to decide on strategies. These appear to have been conceived with the notion that it would become clear just what needs to be done by examining the issues. Differing opinions and varying levels of information, of course, proved that not to be the case. The result of this sort of complaint is to undermine one of the chief perceived (and potential) benefits of an accountability program. In general, such programs do less to increase the holding of staff to account that to increase the rationality of that process, the explicitness of criteria used. Several administrators (although not many teachers) in New Westfield did, in fact, remark that they liked the greater structure as it made their jobs, and those of their subordinates, clearer. If, however, objectives change frequently enough that people are not sure just what they are expected to be doing, then these benefits are greatly mitigated. Confusion and insecurity are the results where clarity and structure were the aims.

Lastly, before we go on to look at implementation and results, we should say something about the volume of paperwork generated by the ERP. This is perhaps the most common complaint about accountability systems everywhere, and no less so in New Westfield. There seems some justification for it everywhere, not particularly much more so in New Westfield. There is quite a lot of paper to be passed out, forms to fill out, etc. All student papers must be kept in order to verify grades should there be any question at the end of the year. And, of

course, a key element of the objectives' notion is that the objectives be written. Some of the reasons this seems a burden are that teachers are just not used to it. We doubt it will always seem so intolerable. Another is that, as we have noted, the early years of the system have been characterized by frequent changes in objectives which have necessitated changes in paperwork, and have meant that instead of becoming more familiar, and thus easier to handle, forms have changed and required greater effort to fill out. It has been the unfortunate responsibility of Department Chairman to see that these forms have been correctly completed. They have frequently found this task made more difficult by their own incomplete understanding of exactly what was demanded. Paperwork became a major issue during implementation, as we shall see.

Implementation: The Educational Reform Program was clearly the creation of the new superintendent from the beginning. Teachers and administrators from throughout the district were initially consulted in the formulation of the program, but even the superintendent indicated that there was a great deal of disapproval on their part. Clearly they felt that they were only being asked to rubber stamp a program which had already been decided upon in all its essentials. Similarly, in the ways and for the reasons that we have described, building administrators have felt left out of the program from the beginning. Far from feeling an investment in the ERP they have felt it to be a threat. Despite these problems, the program has succeeded in its primary 'paper' task of formulating all the explicit instructional objectives. There is now (and has been since a year and a half

after the program was introduced) an official learning unit on file for every course in the district.

From the point of view of most members of the district, the program was instituted all at once at a general meeting of all staff (K-12 and special units). Relatively little explanation was given, yet members were expected to do their jobs properly pretty much the first time around. We have already mentioned the reasons why this hope was not to be fulfilled. In fact, largely because of this expectation, many of the changes were not to happen at all. The lack of intermediate supervisory and supportive levels and of gradual training programs run by people with an investment in the new system are chief among the reasons for this failure. At first, principals retained their authority; then they lost it in two steps.

The superintendent hired an "Implementation Services Coordinator" who was to handle all matters arising from the ERP. Soon, however, it became apparent that this had only created a two-headed horse, as the superintendent was himself too much involved in the program to relinquish any significant authority. This, in fact, remained a problem throughout his tenure. He was remarkably successful at getting things done through his own force of will--and New Westfield needed a forceful leader--but he was catastrophically unable to delegate tasks and authority to intermediate members of the hierarchy. The Implementation Services Coordinator soon gave way to the Instructional Council, colloquially known as the Director's Group. Members of this body did not have specific tasks in terms of its programs, but rather otherwise defined areas (e.g., subject matters). Each of them had a partial responsibility for accountability, but none of them wholly devoted to it.

Thus even while this group tended to support the ERP and to approve of the superintendent's actions, they did not feel as great a sense of ownership of the innovation as they might have done. Further, since none of them had a primary task definition in terms of the ERP, it was not readily translated into practice through their day-to-day activities. They did not constitute an adequate medium for communicating the program throughout the system--partly because they were themselves fairly centralized.[1]

Beyond the general meeting at which the superintendent introduced the program, a number of other dissemination strategies were tried, none with any substantial success. In part, this is because the decision to implement the program had been made rather suddenly, almost accidentally, for external reasons. In October 1972, the (then new) superintendent had invited each school to draft a proposal for a project which the faculty members in that building felt represented their priorities in conjunction with their particular community. The proposal was to be written so that the objectives were behaviorally stated and an evaluation of the design was included in those objectives. No other guidelines were given, and most teachers (and many administrators) had not previously been exposed to this sort of systematic approach before. Their introduction was rather summary, in addition to which, many felt that this was not going to lead to any formal implementation. In the spring of 1974, the Board of Education capitalized on an invitation to submit a proposal under an emergency school aid act which primarily involved aid to desegregation. The New Westfield proposal simply incorporated all the various school-building project descriptions as its design. The proposal was accepted and New Westfield received an ESAA grant.

The central administration had then to organize itself in a hurry to carry through its accountability implementation, using the ESAA funds to help it on its way. About 60 staff members were paid to attend a four-week training program in August. These were to become the vanguard of New Westfield's accountability revolution. For the rest of the teachers, September 1973 was their introduction. When they showed up to work, they received the beginnings of their in-service training, and their first real introduction to the ERP. As one central office administrator told us:

> Mr. Phillips always argued that it was a logical extension of the building projects, but I'm not sure the teachers saw that it followed logically.

In any event, the teachers objected. Many--including participants --felt that the August 1973 workshop was an inadequate introduction. A key complaint was that it lumped together all the different levels of staff in the district, despite the differences in their concerns. The new behavioral objective report cards created a more dramatic protest, however. The teachers filed a grievance claiming that contractually defined decision-making apparatus--chiefly discussions--had been violated in what they saw as a rather capricious action of the board. Further, they felt that the new paperwork demands went beyond their contractual obligations. Basically, the district sat on the grievance for quite some time, then denied it. In September 1974, the existing paperwork demands, which with other things had led to the grievance proceedings, were increased with the introduction of the new report cards. The board continued to resist the arbitration sought by the SEA, and eventually the district's attorney sought an injunction with the courts to prevent the issue from going to arbitration. The key

question had become one of whether the board had the right to introduce the reform program at all, and especially in the way it had done. The judge eventually decided that the board was within its prerogatives to introduce curriculum reform of any kind, but that the new work was sufficient to represent a change in working conditions. He ordered the board and the SEA to negotiate on that issue. Clerical support was eventually added and the report cards retained.

The implementation program can perhaps best be described as minimal. The most unfortunate aspect of its design, however, would seem to be its neglect of the units in which people ordinarily work within the system and with which their strongest psycho-social attachments lie. This is not to say that this sentient system was necessarily highly effective or ultimately desirable. It was in several ways not so. Yet, it was a system, and it was strong enough to reject the more superficial rationalization which was attempted.

Comment: We have commented already on the paper successes of the New Westfield Educational Initiative Project. Our present task does not involve a reconsideration of its technical aspects, which, in general are unremarkable--in either positive or negative senses. An evaluation of instructional results has been carried out a private firm: Educational Evaluation Group. We would put a slightly more critical cast on its findings than do the members of the EEG, who are prone to such observations as the following (which comes after noting that little or no gain took place on the State scales as a result of the ERP):

> However, it must also be pointed out that the Program did not lead to any decline in [State's] scale performance and, in the eighth grade did produce overall gains in knowledge scores (p. 32 of July 1975 Validation Report [emphasis added]).

In general, the New Westfield testing pattern is one familiar to observers of urban educational test scores. Children test over level at the start, near level in late primary school, and generally below level after. There is a slight pick-up (although not matching standardized grade level) in the last year of high school, presumably due to the effects of drop-outs. There is very little overall difference in student performance under the new system as compared with the old.

The primary object of the reform has thus not been achieved. In the process of the change, however, intense hostilities on the part of teachers have been aroused. Teachers do not like the program. Their dislike is widespread, not confined to a handful of trouble-makers. When asked whether they felt the B.O.L.U.P. was something the district needed, 85% responded negatively in 1975. On this as on other questions, feelings seem to have become widely negative as the program continues. Seventy-six percent of the teachers in fact suggested that the administrators in their schools did not truly believe in and support the program. With this kind of opposition it is not surprising that it has not succeeded as its originators would have liked. In our opinion, the major problems have been in implementation and administration, not in the technical design of the program. In fact, some teachers suggest that most of the formal aims are not new; it's the means which are new. We would argue that it is even less the technical means than it is the organizational circumstances of these means. By this we refer to the context of the changes in terms of community support (or lack thereof), and to the administrative power struggles into which the ERP was inevitably drawn. Whether it can be saved now is anyone's guess. Perhaps under another name, the key

principles could be salvaged. But they could be saved only by becoming the property, as it were, of the intermediate levels of the organization. The first thought of field researchers was that teachers wanted the decision-making power themselves, on the line. On further examination we would amend this view. It is not more decisions but fewer which teachers want to have to make in the course of their duty. They want, as they are fond of saying, to get on with teaching. The are willing to let others make the decisions, as long as they are reasonably well and visibly made. This can best be effected by an increase --not a decrease--in school level decision-making power. How this will affect other concerns--such as equality--is another matter. In administrative terms though, it seems crucial, and we think other programs should be designed with this in mind.

Notes

1. The staff on the Instructional Council are: The directors of elementary, secondary, career and adult education; the directors of Pupil Personnel Services, Title One Programs, and Multi-Media Services.

Chapter VII

ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE SERVICE OF RETRENCHEMENT: CASE STUDY THREE

Many accountability implementations have been begun as part of an overall effort to bring a new level of instructional quality to a school district. In fact, in educational uses this ideology has probably been predominant. In the broader spectrum of organizations implementing formal systems, however, finances, and a conservative fiscal viewpoint, more often provide the impetus. Since most of the formal techniques in use in education have come from the business world, or from other parts of the public sector, this presents a problem of transition. Often accountability measures are merged with instructional changes, or ideologies which are not really compatible. Insufficient attention has been given to the vicissitudes and variations of the situations into which accountability is introduced. Will it fare better in a stable or rapidly changing environment? Is it possible to fit the standardization involved at many levels of accountability systems with individualized instruction? Are fiscal techniques appropriate to behavioral goals at all? We have dealt with aspects of the answers to these questions in the preceding chapters, and before we go on to summarize our answer, we will look at a complementary situation in order to fill out our picture. In Tarryford, accountability was implemented as a purely fiscal and primarily conservative measure.

This situation represents a substantial minority of accountability implementations, and is a clearer case than most. This is not to say that a majority of educational uses of formal accountability systems have ignored financial issues. On the contrary, few have done so, and

most have had finances at the core of their design. Few, however, have been as clear as to the limits of their systems. Most have produced a confused global ideology in which saving money, individualizing instruction, improving standardized test scores, and formalizing staff evaluations have been jumbled together--along with other goals. At the least, they have attempted to accommodate a wide range of organizational issues to a financial model. Not so Tarryford. The reason is, perhaps, that the Tarryford School District has had experience with panaceas (or at least with high expectations) in its recent past. In the late 1960's it instituted a program called 'Why Not?' which was intended--and successful--to bring the district up to the top level nationwide. The basic theme of the program was spending--an attempt to buy excellence on the open market. By the early 1970's this program (which we will discuss below) had achieved considerable fruits, but costs were also beginning to rise at a rapid rate. Tarryford came relatively late onto the accountability bandwagon, thus, and with a school board dominated by senior executives, it had fiscal efficiency as its goal.

The Situtation: Tarryford is a cluster of suburban communities in Green County. It is primarily an upper-middle-class area, with its local economy dominated by several nearby corporations which employ a large proportion of the residents in executive positions. The community (and in fact the county) are coming to the end of a period of economic and population growth. New housing is limited and gradually the demography is changing. The proportion of older residents is growing; that of younger families is dropping. This resulted in a decline of 4.2% in school children during 1974-75, with an estimated further decline of 3.9% over the next five years. At the same time, costs

increased by 12.2% in 1974-75. In general, the Tarryford community has greeted these changes with surprise, and just a bit of indignation.

The late sixties, for all their well publicized problems and protests, were the crest of a wave of good fortune for most Tarryford residents and for the community itself. It had achieved a high level of prosperity, apparent security, and status in the eyes of its neighbors. This last was particularly important. Tarryford is a markedly status-conscious community, and in two steps it decided to buy itself that prestigious commodity--a first-rate school system. The first step came with the creation of the district in 1961, with the withdrawal of a sending relationship previously carried out with another town. This was one of the early signs of a change in the community's character following the arrival of the large corporate population. Tarryford had previously been several small towns (officially and to some extent socially, it still is). The older residents were content to let things continue as they had been going. The newer residents, though, were determined to create a new school system which would provide a strong education for their children. These latter were very strongly college-oriented, and in fact were soon quite ivy-oriented. Although there were some conflicts initially between the two populations, things seemed to progress smoothly. (Although conflicts have continued in such areas as vocational education.)

The second step came in 1967 with the creation of the 'Why Not?' program. There was a new superintendent, but he appears to have been subservient in most respects to the board of education, and the board in fact took the lead. The key factor to note here is the close involvement of the board in the running of the school system. It was

composed largely of prominent corporate executives and had very high ambitions for the district. Its members were also loath to delegate authority to the administrators of the district and took many relatively small-scale decisions themselves, as well as charting overall policy. The Tarryford District continues to work in the context of a very active, concerned, and high pressure community. It is subject to continual and immediate scrutiny of the educational results that community members feel important--e.g., college admissions and test scores--and the styles they approve of--order, discipline, etc. The 'etc.' in the last sentence, in fact, might be taken to include the censorship which the very conservative community has at different times and with different content introduced into the schools. Only on a couple of occasions did this provoke considerable amounts of conflict, but it exemplifies not only the orientation, but the organization of community pressure. This pressure is largely exerted in the attempt to maintain a sheltered atmosphere, and at the same time to produce academic excellence.

The second step in the course of action dictated by these only partially congruent objectives--Why Not?--expanded the scope and costs of educational activities considerably. The strategy was simple--hire the best teachers by paying the best salaries. And the strategy was successful. Teachers were from around the Northeast and middle-Atlantic--primarily a young and innovative crew. The initial effects of this showed up in prestige and in more concrete results. The community was pleased with its new educational system. But at least two new problems were implicit in this--on the front of community relations. First was the fact that the teachers brought into the

community had to perform under a high level of pressure, in a situation where everyone had very high expectations--including the new teachers. Community expectations tended to create something of an adversary--or at least evaluative relation between teachers and the community. This never reached a crisis level, but it has remained a source of tension. Perhaps its intransigence is the result of the second academic problem in school-community relations. This is the fact that educators are, despite their high professional qualifications and salaries, relatively low in the Tarryford hierarchy of socio-economic status. The senior corporate executives make more money and figure more prominently in the community's prestige and glamour perspective. Further, many community members regard teachers as having a very easy job, as opposed to the (perceived) roughness of their own corporate lives.

In response to this complaint, teachers are quick to assert (and we think in many respects correctly) that community members are not aware of the problems they have to face. What is surprising about this is the fact that so little is done about it, or at least little headway is made. There are social events and formal school affairs to bring parents and teachers together. We have already observed that parents are keenly interested in the schools. But, say teachers, they are interested only within very narrow bounds--only in concrete results, sheltering their children, and knowing how big a bill they have to foot. The community--and the school board seems to reflect the broader sentiment in this respect--expects education to be a rather cut and dried, hard and fast process with clear boundaries and criteria of success--and therefore controllable/accountable within very close parameters.

Two factors have brought this expectation and desire for control into the forefront recently. First and foremost is the emergence of economic pressure even in Tarryford as recession cut into boom nationwide. Coupled with this, but deserving emphasis in its own right, is a growing sense of insecurity, a feeling that the little world that people in Tarryford worked so hard to build is not as impregnable as for a while they believed. It is perhaps always the case that a position achieved so rapidly must seem precarious. In addition, however, certain of the foundations of the community's social structure show weaknesses which the insecurities may be just responses to. In this, Tarryford is typical of modern American suburban communities--it is cut off from any sense of roots, of traditional strength. With the loss of a sense of personal continuity of existence, members come more and more to depend on formalized, abstract, and impersonal modes of control and organization. This underlying insecurity causes them to react excessively to relatively small disorders.

Organizational Background. We have already mentioned the key turning points in the brief history of the Tarryford School District. Let us begin our further analysis of them with a consideration of a more enduring problem. This is the weakness--only beginning to disappear--at the senior administrative levels. This has existed from the very beginning of the district, and although the personalities of the first superintendents no doubt played a significant part in it, the key factor was the dominant attitude of the School Board. The board allowed the professional administration very little latitude in which to work, took most of the key initiatives itself, and demanded basic data in order to go over administrative decisions in detail. This meant that

it was not in the interests of the superintendent or other senior administrators to make important or potentially controversial decisions --these were referred back to the board.

This process contributed to three problems, however: First, it created something of a vacuum at the top of the system, as the figures who were available to subordinates most of the time--the administrators--were not those with the real power, not those making the real decisions. Second, it accentuated educators' feeling that the community did not respect them and regard them as capable of doing a good job on their own. Thirdly, it reduced the responsiveness of the district to internal and external pressures by slowing down the overall decision-making process, and limiting the extent to which administrators could feel secure in acting on their own. This was particularly a problem as the board seems to have oscillated between a conservative and liberal position and not provided a consistent line on which administrators could base their action. One community member remarked, in fact, somewhat amusingly, that he thought the community would in general favor the conservative stance, but:

> the community has not been able to get a conservative member on the School Board. Individuals who run on conservative tickets get elected but generally become liberal after being a member for a period of time.

It appears that either the social pressure of their fellow members or their analysis of concrete issues turn them to a more liberal position. This liberalism has been identified in large part with high spending and the proliferation of programs, the promotion of individualized instruction and open self-determined atmosphere. In fact, the board has changed positions on some of these issues more than once, and is again

in a conservative period. It is not the specific merits of either position which concerns us, but the deleterious effects of continuously moving back and forth rather than adopting a more moderate and stable position. This seems to us to result in part from the split in the community between adherents of different points of view (which some members see as following the lines of a split between an articulate, educationally oriented Jewish minority, and a less vocal, more conservative WASP majority). It also follows in part from the very activity of the Board. Because the Board concerns itself more with immediate issues than with long-term policy making, it accentuates the impact of its own instability. Continuity, we must emphasize again (as we have throughout) is in and of itself an important social factor. If it is sacrificed too much to other goals, any social organization must suffer.

In recent years, the Board has shifted more into a conservative direction, as the accountability program testifies. It has, even more recently, also limited its involvement in immediate administrative issues. This should work to alleviate some of the problems we have just been discussing. The Board seems, rather consciously, to have made a decision to recognize a boundary between the province of administrators and itself. This should give the administrators support for stronger decision-making and end the situation where they are seen by members of the system as being 'just plant-managers, really.' Hopefully, this may end a trend of the last couple of years in which, while relations betwen teachers and administrators have gotten better, the relations of both with the Board have gotten worse. This is partly because both groups feel hurt that the Board of Education conveys a lack of confidence in the schools. Ironically, perhaps, this has been

accentuated by the very program of 'Why Not?' Teachers and administrators were given a somewhat exaggerated picture of their recruitment, their quality, the level of performance of the district, etc. And then the Board seems to feel--despite all this ideology of professional quality--that the educators are not good enough to run the system themselves. This feeling produces not only a certain level of resentment--flaring up especially in issues such as the 1975 teachers' job action--but a general modicum of apathy or feeling of stagnation. Many educators think that Tarryford has a great wealth of talent, and is not making the best use of it--thus their own talents are being allowed, as it were, to atrophy.

We should hasten to add, that overall we do not consider this to be the case. We feel that there are real problems stemming from the Board's role, but that the talent in the district is high level, and is fairly well used, relative to other districts. In fact, we argue that the kind of complaining which goes on in Tarryford is indicative more of activity than of apathy. This does not remove the sizeable minority opinion, though, nor does it mean that relatively high standards are enough, and that the district ought not to try to raise them in absolute measure. It is a shame that people are coming more and more to dismiss the 'Why Not?' progam as a myth, rather than remembering the very considerable strides it made. This is, of course, not an accidental forgetfulness, but is largely the result of its use as a myth or ideology by the district, and, of course, of its considerable exaggeration.

Recently there has been a movement for a greater specificity of educational and administrative objectives, which should help to correct some of these mythical exaggerations. It should also help to reduce

the feeling among teachers that the ideology of 'Why Not? is being used unfairly as a goal, as the justification for a vague and occasionally unfair evaluatory system. In general, the evaluation system (or lack thereof) has been a safe one to teachers, and rather routine, so no one is too incensed about it. There are some complaints about its following seniority rather strongly, and about the importance of social factors in success within the district. Teachers have requested that criteria be made more explicit, and that an essay be substituted for the present 1-5 scale which seems somewhat arbitrary to teachers and to some of the principals who must use it as well. In 1974-75 a new primary structural objective was introduced into the district, being to: "encourage greater participation by staff members in basic decisions about the evaluation program."

This last is an indication of the ability of the district to identify and respond to issues which are producing tension. Perhaps it is not as quick to do so as some would like, but it is certainly quicker than most. One problem to which it has not been able to produce a coherent response is the diversity of feelings surrounding the middle school. Tarryford has instituted an organization of grade clusters designed to integrate the educational experiences of the student from year to year. This has in practice worked out to three integrated groups with little continuity from one to the next, however. This is not the key or really intransigent problem, though. Nor is the lack of integration among these units (although this is relevant). The problem has centered at the middle school because of the different behavioral (and instructional) patterns which obtain there. The middle school seems to lack a clear orientation within the system, a

clear definition of its special role and character--something which obtains to a greater extent for both high and elementary schools. It does have certain specific characteristics though, most notably an attempt at non-directive education, individualization to a greater extent, and an open environment. This leads community members--and some other educators--to criticize its 'discipline.' Middle school teachers frequently retort that this is a function of the age of the children, or that the children should not be over-inhibited at this age.

None of the middle school's internal problems seem serious. The problem is more one of articulation of components within the system. There was an overall plan of contruction at the outset which was rejected for financial reasons. The middle school was a compromise conversion product, and has continued to have the unstable characteristics of most compromises. Its more open structure has excited a certain amount of jealousy from other teachers, who envy its freedom. At the same time parents wonder whether their children are getting the quality of education there that they ought. Their complaints in this regard have more to do with discipline than with concrete academic achievement. The openness of the middle school conflicts with the attitude of the community which sees education as a potentially controllable, rationable process. It also arouses insecurities based on the community's rather fragile hold on its position in the world and its (closely related) intense status-consciousness.

The key problem in the case of the middle school is simply that it is not understood by either the district or the community. This occurs a) because it lacks a clear definition of itself, and b)

because of the social distance which separates sub-units in the Tarryford School District. The middle school becomes an object for worries stemming from this because it is the most visibly different. The exaggeration of the sub-units is general in Tarryford however. It is to a certain extent the other side of the historical lack of a strong central leader. In general, we feel that an extreme of differentiation is a better situation than an extreme of centralization, but of course administration does not fare best with extreme stances. Tarryford has three distinctively different school-levels, and would do well to increase the familiarity of teachers and administrators with those in which they do not work. Tarryford does have a close-knit communications network, and quite a large proportion of teachers who feel they are consulted when changes which will affect their jobs are to be made. But it also has an assumption that administration can and should be a purely hierarchically specialized activity. In other words, members of the school district seem to feel that each has his own discrete task for which he should assume responsibility, and that those of others are no concern to him (unless other people's decisions encroach on his welfare). There are very few lateral connections among sub-units. This inevitably has deleterious effects on the extent of overall integration, sense of shared tasks and ability to coordinate resource allocation. The last, of course, has its direct bearing on accountability.

Accountability systems can, conceivably, provide for greater integration of components in an organization. The information involved even in their most formal aspects can be used to increase inter-unit awareness, and indeed the compatibility of structures. This is not how

it is used in Tarryford, however, where it is a purely fiscal system and operated primarily at high levels. We anticipate a certain amount of tension in coming years as competing demands accelerate and available resources decline. If members of one unit are not able to see the situation of their fellows in other units, there is more likelihood that they will perceive allocations as unfair. Recently, in fact, local autonomy has increased. Building administrators' prerogative has been expanded, and local curriculum committees have been set up.

We see these as good trends in and of themselves, but unfortunately they cannot be seen just in and of themselves. They must be viewed in the overall context. So, if their benefits are to be maintained, there must be some parallel mechanism to integrate the district's highly differentiated sub-units. One administrative office intended to cross-cut and unify these disparate local units is that of the department chairmen. The reaction of many district members to department chairmen gives an indication of the strength of localist sentiment. They were described to us as an anachronism, as not useful to teachers because they were not on the local scene (except for the high school). Yet, importantly, the central office indicated that department chairmen are coming to have more budgetary power--which hardly makes them an anachronism. It seems to us a good idea to increase the department orientation since there is little danger of its becoming as separatist as the local units. The department chairmen are also not a completely centralized body, and there are enough of them that they can have considerable personal contact with their teachers--albeit probably not as much as they would like.

A major feature in the district's drive for excellence in the late 60's and early 70's was the proliferation of programs. This resulted in one immediate complaint. This was that although steps had been taken to do something in the area of vocational education as well as college preparation, the 'average kid' was being left out. There was little interest in or attention to those kids who did all right academically, but did not excell. This remains a consistent theme of complaints today, and is perhaps one of the problems which a truly individualized evaluative system might deal with. This does not strike us as very likely to come about, however, as the pressure group for the average is neither organized nor articulate. In general, the community is able to exert pressure at either extreme but not for the middle. And its main concern remains with the state examinations and the topflight academic programs.

Program proliferations also produced a longer term problem: cost. We have noted that costs are presently rising rapidly even as enrollment drops. Primarily for this reason, many district and community leaders regard some curtailment of curriculum as necessary. Although everyone likes the breadth of offerings presently available, it is widely recognized that the district will, in the near future be unable to support them. Threats to programming flexibility include a) rising unit costs, b) dubious level of state aid, c) tax saturation, d) population change, and e) increasing strength of the teacher organization. It is in response to its awareness of these fiscal difficulties that the district introduced its accountability system. The system is primarily oriented toward a rational assessment of the products and needs of various programs in order to rationally allocate funds. It

came in, thus, after--a few years after--the peak of rapid improvement. It is geared to and identified with retrenchment. But this does not mean that the members of the district are really dissatisfied with the whole. Eighty percent of members rated it above average or even best in comparison with other districts; 86% would recommend it to a young friend as a desirable place to work.

The System: The Tarryford accountability system is a computer-based management information system. It uses the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (a state agency) computer facilities and has its own in-district staff. There is no formal link between this PPBS system and student achievement measures. It is the most straightforward fiscal system we encountered in our research. It follows the formal lines of an almost textbook PPBS design. In fact, the superintendent has voiced some dissatisfaction with its mechanistic, purely quantitative nature. His worry is echoed by many in the district who fear that the system reflects a dominant attitude in which finances are an end in themselves and attention is diverted from the truly 'educational' issues. In this they are right, but only to an extent. The ability to pay for high quality education is a real issue, and one which varies with economic trends.

The superintendent has plans for the eventual development and gradual introduction of behavioral objectives as a new focus for the extant accountability system. This would be more than just a technical innovation. It would be a major transformation of the system. As it is, the system assumes that behavior follows on funding in constant proportion. It has not left much room for the unintended consequences of even fiscal planning. The administration, following the PPBS, has

allocated more funds to certain academic areas in order to build them up, in accord with an overall view of the task system of the district. Lower level members of the organization, however, have reacted in terms of sentient relations and attachments which the system did not take into consideration. Many teachers, for example, felt that the system itself assigned the priorities, and thus aided some subject areas at the expense of others and of overall curriculum. In other words, they thought that the system was a reward for performance operation. This notion has hurt faculty relations.

Such problems are perhaps more in the area of implementation, which we shall touch on next. Here we may note that there are not any serious problems with the design of the Tarryford accountability system. It tends to adopt an externally formulated package rather directly, but still carries it off well. Its problems come either from implementation, or simply from narrowness. The system cuts out such a restricted chunk of district management as its purview that it perhaps cannot help but curtail the overall view. It has become--been all along as far as we can tell--a special problem management system, not a comprehensive planning and integrative system. Such a program would have to involve behavioral objectives and greater attention to intra-group relations in the district.

The Implementation: The implementation of accountability in Tarryford is dominated by the fact that the school Board led the way. The initiative belonged to the Board, and particularly to its dynamic president from the start. Many district members feel it remained just a tool of the Board. The fact that it was predominantly a fiscal accountability system meant that it could go into operation without

any extensive process of integration into the psycho-social life of the organization. There was thus little done in the way of group work or other organized implementation or familiarization work. Implementation concentrated on those people who would have direct technical responsibilities within the system.

For this reason, most members of the school district had little understanding of the system when, inevitably, its effects began to reach them. Department chairman and building administrators found the system an influence on their budgeting procedures--as it was intended to be. They then communicated this to teachers and other staff who were concerned with the actual use of funds. But it was communicated unsystematically, and generally only where complaints arose. Thus low level administrators answered the complaints of those whose budgets were cut with the protest that the PPBS system made them do it. This hardly constituted a favorable introduction to accountability.

These problems were to some extent rectified over time. By the 1974-75 school year, when planning components were introduced into the process of preparing the 1975-76 budget, a very clear outline of what was expected of staff had been worked out. It was still primarily oriented toward administrators, and toward their formal needs. It did not answer--nor did other efforts--the personal questions, the problems of threatened sentient organization which arose at the same time. These, as we have seen, are only tangentially related to the accountability effort, but the lack of clarity in the introduction of accountability allowed it to become a symbol for all these varied woes.

When proposed budgets were prepared, the district made a somewhat more sustained effort to 'sell' them to the community than it had done with its own professional staff. The fiscal reason for this is obvious, and unavoidable, but many staff not unreasonably took umbrage at their treatment. This, they felt, was simply a sign that the district regarded them as just employees, and did not feel obligated to consult them in any detail.

Comment: These are the problems, and they all stem from a lack of organized implementation effort due to the assumption that a purely fiscal system would have no effects beyond purely fiscal issues. The complex interrelationships of persons and issues in the district have, of course, proven this position wrong. All this said, however, and all the various other problems we discovered duly noted, we must give Tarryford very high marks for overall administration. In some ways, its educational situation is an easier one to manage than those of inner city schools, but this should not detract from the compliments which are due it. If it can bring a greater stress on long-term policies and planning to its accountability effort, it will be in a very good position. This should enable it to better weather crises such as the recent recession--not because it will avoid them, but because instead of sudden reactions and shifts of policy it can work coherently over longer periods. This continuity, in itself, would help to solve some of the sentient problems which the district faces due to the insecurity of faculty.

Chapter VIII

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS: A PSYCHO-SOCIAL APPROACH

Accountability systems have been implemented in a variety of different ways, for many different reasons, and with numerous different results. One of the most pervasive problems any student must face is the lack of definition of the field as a whole. The term 'accountability' masks a welter of only partially related systems. These share no single unifying characteristic other than their common participation in the myth of accountability. This myth suggests that there are technological answers to almost the whole gamut of operational and planning problems which face educational organizations. Because these answers are seen as technological, believers feel that they can be explicitly and fully formulated, and implemented from above without attention to the social and psychological organization of the institution.

Of course, they cannot be. The first and perhaps most important step in implementing an accountability system is to decide just what one means by that term. Is one seeking control as an administrator? Or is one seeking an organizational structure more responsive to the opinions and needs of all its members? Is continuity or change the goal? This is not simply a matter of choosing the goals for a pre-set accountability system. This is the fundamental conceptualization of the enterprise as a whole. The myriad technical tools and formal management approaches do not add up to accountability, nor does any of them exhaust the implication of the term.

Counting, holding to account, explaining, reshaping--all these notions and more are commonly considered objects of accountability systems. And all are valid needs of educational organizations. But they are not the same, and no system treats all equally.

Why do senior educational administrators believe in the myth of accountability? The answers are many, but uncertainty is the most important. The means by which education creates its products are unclear. Indeed, there is far from complete agreement as to just what those products are or should be. The legal, financial, political and administrative environments of educators are continually changing--for better or worse--in most parts of America today. Public scrutiny of educational performance has in many ways--both institutional and informal--increased. Educators have good reason to wish that someone would solve the riddle of their task. But this is unlikely to happen. Although research can make great strides in education, it remains basically and irrevocably dependent on people --perhaps most of all because its clients and its 'raw materials' are both people. Just as psychotherapy is a highly skilled specialty learned by practice and training, so education cannot be turned into a set of rules to be routinely followed. Even in fields where task demands are very straightforward--such as assembly line work--research has shown that social and psychological relations have a great impact on quality and performance and quantity of work. This is much more the case in education where a great deal depends on the responsiveness of teachers to the endless variations of classroom situations. Schools are unusual in the proportion of professionals

who are their primary line personnel. Programs which are not effective for the classroom teacher are generally not effective in education. And the administration of classroom teachers can never be as complete as that of assembly line workers, nor as direct.

The creators of the accountability myth sold the notion as a panacea, a cure for the insecurity of the educational administrator. On paper it looked good. Results in practice have been sometimes positive, sometimes negative, predominantly dubious. In many of the situations we investigated, the most prominent reason for this has been that planners lumped together in the system a wide range of disparate (and in some cases conflicting) goals. Goals which had little or nothing to do with formal management techniques--individualization of instruction, for example--were combined with the introduction of computer-based information systems and new techniques of administrative decision-making. These various objectives need to be made concrete, sorted out from each other and reduced from the level of ideology to that of practical application. Individualization of instruction and extended information control are not simply 'goods'; they are means, tools.

In most implementation attempts, genuine educational objectives are combined with expedient administrative goals. That is, the accountability implementations are designed to improve instruction <u>and</u> increase administrative control--with the latter seen as an independent goal. This leads to the subjugation of the instructional side to the administrative where control is seen as the only effective means to improving teaching. The bulk of the disagreements and

conflicts which have attended accountability implementations stem from this choice of means. Teachers, middle management and central office generally agree as to fundamental educational goals, but the stress on administrative--especially central office--control allows a line to be drawn between segments of the organization. The situation is then ripe for polarization.

Such conflicts are seldom inevitable, but even where they cannot be avoided, they can be much better managed. This management, however, depends crucially on anticipation. This is exactly what is obviated where expedient administrative reasons for implementation are confused with educational goals. At the very least, the only people who feel any sense of ownership of the program are senior administrators. If these senior administrators do not clearly recognize the choice they are making by introducing control-oriented objectives into the implementation, then negative responses are likely to surprise and confuse them. In addition, the implementation strategy likely to be most effective is determined very much by those considerations. A collaborative implementation structure (often the first choice of consultants) may appear as only a charade where the program is highly formal and centralized. In such cases, it is generally best to be straightforward and as unobtrusive as possible. Most of all, it is important in such cases to avoid trying to sell the accountability system on the basis of objectives it cannot reasonably hope to fulfill.

If, on the other hand, a program is intended to radically structure the organization (instead of, say, only increasing information

control) then a collaborative implementation structure is vital. We shall consider the various implementation designs shortly. Before we do, we need to look at three major preliminary steps in the process of accountability implementation. These steps (the first two of which are notably absent from most reconsiderations and anticipations alike) are (1) the decision to implement a system, (2) the organizational evaluation which underpins planning, and (3) the choice of the system itself. Each of these stages poses a number of questions which can be left implicit or made explicit. Each of these questions will be resolved in a decision with considerable importance for the future of the accountability effort. Unfortunately, these resolutions are often not made into conscious decisions but are allowed to slip by unnoticed. These preliminary discussions are a summation of earlier sections of this report. Our major thrust has been on the analysis of the underlying factors which determine the course of events through which an implementation is likely to progress. We see discussion of implementation strategy without thorough consideration of this background as essentially fruitless. Since we have devoted much attention to this already, however; we shall be very brief here.

Deciding To Implement a System: One of the results of the faith of educators in the myth of accountability, and the salesman-like attitude of outside experts has been the assumption that a decision to implement is always appropriate. In the first place, such a decision can be made in a variety of ways for a variety of reasons--not only with regard to a variety of formal systems. More than this, the need for accountability formalizations is not every-

where equally pressing. It must be recognized that an implementation is always a disturbance to established patterns of operation, and the expenditure of resources on accountability always involves a sacrifice in some other area. It would be a mistake for any consultant to approach an organization without asking why he was called, and why the overall strategy of which he is a part was chosen. He should not let his belief that he and/or his approach are useful impair his analysis.

The first thing that anyone concerned with accountability from within or without an organization must realize is that no system is created in a vacuum. No accountability system is ever the first one that an organization experiences (unless the organization itself is brand new). No matter how informal and/or inadequate a previous system, there is always some way of keeping track of what is going on. Any new implementation is generally a step in the direction of formalization of accountability. It may be only that, or it may also bring a change in emphasis. In any event, the process is one of accountability formalization. Most administrators and change agents appear to treat their task as one of creating a system where none had previously existed, and this leads to many of their problems. In particular, it leads to an underestimation of the reasons organization members have for resisting changes and maintaining their existing relations.

Reasons for Implementation: There are many potential reasons for accountability formalization, of which four categories are prominent. These do not include the general but chimerical seeking after the illusion of smooth operation and control which we described

above. We are considering realistic reasons here. Of these, control is still perhaps the most prominent. Information is a very powerful tool for organizational control, and many accountability systems act to martial information for central office use. It does not appear to us that formal management systems act to greatly increase the control of administrators in general over classroom teachers. They do work, however, to increase the direct control of central office administrators in proportion to that of intermediate (particularly building level) administrators. The great problem with implementing accountability systems for purposes of control does not stem from any uses of this control. It stems from its inadequacy. No accountability system can produce enough control to really make the school district work purely to executive orders.

This problem is aggravated by the fact that control-oriented implementations generally take place as last ditch efforts to stabilize deteriorating situations. In such circumstances, they often precipitate crises instead of preventing them. Within moderate limits, control is always an aim of accountability systems. They are intended to influence the course of events and the behavior of individuals and groups within the organization. In such moderate instances, however, the control is shaped by particular and circumscribed ends. It is a problem precisely when it is absent. The attempt to use accountability systems for control comes when control is illusory or fragile. It will be recalled in this connection that one situation in which control is fragile is where it is highly centralized and out of proportion to concrete benefits. This occurs where organizations are

not working at a high level of consciousness, but instead are allowing members to project unconscious needs for authorities problematically onto one or more leaders. Such a situation may yield power in the short run, but is always unstable. Any considerable increase in the organization's members' abilities to act consciously will lead them to exert their real power in aggression against the previously worshipped leader. An accountability implementation is likely to produce--intentionally or unintentionally--just such an increase in awareness. The very necessity of re-evaluating the situation as it is disturbed works in this way.

In sum, accountability implementations which are perceived by the central administration as tools for increasing their control of the organization are likely to backfire. It should be mentioned, though, that this analysis is really applicable only to the behavioral side of control in the organization. This is the side which most directly influences the educational process. In purely fiscal terms, it is quite possible for a formal management system to greatly increase the control of central executives. The reason for this is that the inanimate resources respond immediately to executive control. The responses of people, on the other hand, are always mediated by their sentient attachments. These work according to patterns of their own; they involve accommodations to internal contradictions and thus inherent instabilities; they require a different level and focus of analysis. This we attempt to summarize below in our section on the evaluation of the organization.

Short-term testing and the evaluation of programs and personnel is the next major reason for the implementation of accountability systems. Where budgetary allocations are the stated subject matter of an accountability system, it is usually some sort of evaluative procedure which is involved. The crucial differentiation is whether this is short- or long-term. Although most systems and especially most implementations ideologically emphasize the planning aspect of their operation, this is in practice usually ignored. The planning is at best year to year. It confronts the comparison of sub-units in the organization but does not deal with the entire structure. Accountability systems implemented for this purpose are the most likely to overemphasize the technical at the expense of the behavioral. If their short-term testing and evaluative function is clearly recognized and accepted as their goal, this is not a major problem. Technical systems are well suited to a wide range of testing and information management activities. Where they do in fact deal with readily measurable factors, and expectations are not overambitious, they perform their basic service.

Problems enter when short-term planning is not enough, or when members of the system reject the evaluative operation of the system. The latter is familiar as the basis of a great many objections posed by teachers around the country informally and through organizations. The former follows from the fact that short-term work is almost always narrow in scope, usually focused on some one or another programs. It necessarily accepts the rest of the organizational structure as given. This becomes problematic when either that organization

changes radically, or that organization is inadequate to its tasks. Where the latter is the case, the problem is simply one of failing to analyze district difficulties at a sufficiently deep level. The former poses a related question, but at a more complex point. That is, the adequacy of the system only becomes an issue during the implementation. Whether or not it was functioning well before, the disruption (or conceivably some external factor) sets off a reaction. The sentient organization may collapse; the balance of power among subgroups may be shifted from one alignment to another. This changes the whole context of the original program, and the meaning of the evaluative data gathered. The organization ceases to be a given: it changes from one moment to the next.

Accountability systems set up to help formalize decision-making and provide short-term data can be very powerful administrative tools. They organize and systematize the relationship of the central administrator to the rest of the organization. This 'rest' is, to the administrator, simply a flow of information which he must assimilate and on the basis of which he must make decisions. The weakness of this approach to accountability is almost a direct product of the extent or likelihood of organizational change. Such a system can only be responsive to the extent that its categories of functioning are continually changed to take account of new parameters. This introduces the question of a meta-system governing the operation of the short-term or specific-focus accountability system. The utilization of such an overall integrative approach is our ideal. Without it, however, the system runs the danger of being even less responsive to

organizational change than reliance on ordinary person-to-person communications. The persons in such exchanges can at least alter the content of their communications to take account of new trends which they observe.

This observation of new trends can, of course, take place using the data from short-term accountability programs. In this it depends (in the absence of a meta-system) on the persons running it. There is considerable danger, past experiences show, that the existence of the system will overawe its operators, so that it is slow to adapt. The system acts to limit change--or even communication of changes--from below because a) it routinizes the kind of information received in the central office and b) it presents itself as a massive block since its operation is beyond the ken of most organization members. This is especially true of advanced computer-based technologies which both bring in a new set of personnel and appear as exotic to most organization members. Short-term accountability projects, then, can be only as effective as the rest of the organization and its administration. The danger they present is largely that they will allow administrators to believe that they do more than they in fact do.

The third major reason an organization might act to formalize accountability is to foster long-term planned change. This is unfortunately uncommon. We have discussed a number of reasons why administrators (like other organization members) are invested in the maintenance of a given institutional order. Most prominently, the established structure makes prediction possible, and the ability to predict is the major stock in trade of organizational leaders. It should be emphasized that a great many more accountability implemen-

tations claim to be concerned with long-range planning and change in organizational structure than really are. In order to deal with long-range change a system must combine considerable sophistication with much more flexibility than most incorporate. Administrators who plan change must seek objectives beyond the consolidation of their own positions and sometimes in conflict with their own expedient interests. And in many cases, long-range change programs may be so disruptive to short-term system functioning that they are impracticable for the school district.

None of the districts we studied intensively had in fact implemented an accountability system which dealt with long-term changes. In one case the claim was made that the system did do so. This exacerbated tensions within the organization and between district and community, for widespread opinion held that change was long overdue, yet the system failed to produce. An accountability system does not, of course, directly carry out a program of long-term changes. Rather it provides for the continuous monitoring of processes of change. One of its considerable advantages is that it can be a good medium for increasing the awareness of organizational members of just what is going on as the district changes. An accountability system can also work to provide continuity through a variety of organizational changes, as it mediates the transitions and provides for consistent informational resources and communication techniques.

A major advantage of long-term planning activities is that they allow the organization to attempt to better integrate its varied operations. Instead of treating each separately and/or as a static structure, the organization can focus on their reciprocal influences.

Each individual program change, for example, has implications for other program areas, for support services, etc. The accountability system can work toward integration if it is of sufficient scope, and if it can reevaluate structure as well as particular processes. The motivation for implementing a long-term change project through formal management, then, is primarily to be able to keep up a high level of consciousness through the course of the change, and to keep up a continuous reevaluation of the direction of change.

One last reason for formalizing management responses needs to be mentioned. This is the obvious category of outside pressure. A great many accountability implementations have been required by hierarchical superiors or funding agencies and have not intense intra-organizational motivation. Such efforts suffer from a predictable lack of enthusiasm. Quite often, the information which they produce is not used to any considerable extent by administrators but simply reported to the stipulated authorities. At the same time, however, such implementations are not generally very threatening to organizational members, for they do not substantially disrupt sentient bonds. In current American public education local districts still retain such an extent of authority that state and federal demands do not have great effect on local sub-groups. The potential for disruption is great--although not primarily through the means of accountability implementations. In general outside pressure does not produce more than a surface implementation unless it also meshes with internal motivations.

The Decision to Implement: The effect of the various reasons for which accountability systems are implemented on their eventual operation is influenced as well by who makes the decision to implement. There

are three loci of such decision-making: from above, from the center, and collaboratively across categories. By from above, we refer to either a hierarchically superior level in the education bureaucracy, or to the local community. The central is the central administration of the district. We found no instances of implementation decisions originating in the lower levels of organizations. There are instances of collaborative decision-making where some combination of community members, central administrators, and other district professionals joined in making the decisions.

In the short run and on technical grounds, a centralized implementation structure is generally the most effective. This usually follows on a centralized decision. The problem is that technical grounds cannot be fully isolated and that the short-run success usually fades rapidly. More than this, however, the decision to implement and the structure of implementation should not be confused. The general decision to implement a formalized planning and budgeting system can often be made by central management and followed by a highly centralized implementation strategy. (This assumes that the decision itself is not deeply opposed by the rest of the organization.) The tendency, however, is for only those who decide to institute an accountability system to feel any sense of ownership of it. A collaborative implementation strategy can only partially overcome this. A centralized, management-centered decision is most common among implementations which originate locally.

A collaborative decision, however, can be effectively implemented through highly centralized procedures. Once the members of the organization feel that they have acted to determine whether a system

should be introduced, and which system this should be, they are already fairly committed. Unless the centralized implementation stragegy changes this system or is actively alienating, it will probably be appreciated. Our research did not find any significant desire on the part of teachers and lower level administrators to increase their burden of work. Nor did most teachers appear to feel that implementation of policy decisions was their task. Indeed, many complained that implementations currently in progress left them with too much responsibility for programs they only partially understood and had had no chance to influence or select. Teachers do not appear to want to take over the running of school districts, contrary to the fears of some administrators. They do want to determine the conditions of their own teaching, within reason, and then be allowed to get on with the task. In this sense, they appreciate efficiency as a virtue of administrators--unless they feel that teaching is being left out of consideration for the sake of formal efficiency. If a top down, centralized structure gets the job done with the least amount of disturbance, then it will be the best one.

Only rarely is a community both organized enough and management oriented enough to decide to impose a formal accountability system on the schools. Tarryford (Case Study No. 3) is such an instance. The system introduced was a technically very sound one, but its source provides a clue to many of the problems it eventually encountered. It bypassed central administration, thus limiting the flexibility of its operation. The professional staff never acted to significantly shape or elaborate the accountability system. Its data were exported from the schools rather than circulated among them. Since such a

system worked without the ordinary hierarchy, it made it difficult for the lower level staff to feel that they were getting to the important decision-makers with their problems.

The ideal, of course, is that the decision to implement an accountability system be a collaborative one. The more different levels of organization participate in the decision, the more they will a) feel a sense of ownership and constructive involvement, b) contribute information concerning their real needs, and c) ensure a fit between task formalization and sentient organization. Collaboration is not something which an accountability system can bring into a district or very readily substitute for. It must be a characteristic of organizational operation before formalization. Accountability, to be really effective, must stem from shared needs. Otherwise its success can never be more than partial. Collaboration is not to be seen as a means to an effective accountability system. Rather, it should be remembered that accountability systems are only means to the important end of effective organizational operation. Collaboration too serves this goal. Those who work with accountability formalizations often fail to realize that some of the most important determinants of their success or failure long predate their implementation.

Evaluating the Organization: It is necessary before carrying out any formalization to thoroughly analyze the nature of the organization and the particular needs around which its current problems and anxieties are focused. Ideally this should be a continuous process--not something saved for special occasions. Too frequently, it is even forgotten when implementations are planned--or at least relegated

to ad hoc impressionistic analyses. Most of our work on this project has been aimed at this phase or aspect of the administration of change. In addition to overall evaluation--or rather as a key to it--we have advocated a diagnostic approach. In this attention is focused on the problems which are most in the forefront of current organizational life. It is recognized, however, that these do not exist simply in and of themselves, but are symptoms produced by deeper, more fundamental organizational contradictions, imbalances, and failures.

It is not immediately clear from the symptom what the underlying cause and/or predisposing condition may be. Therefore, it is always necessary to have broad historical and structural data at hand. The process of evaluation is one best and easiest carried out with the aid of a trained consultant. The skill of the consultant is an important reason for this, but, of course, an administrator could develop the same skills. The really differentiating aspect of consultation is the presence of an outsider within the organization. Such a person can develop a relationship with the organization as a whole much like that which the psychoanalyst develops with his individual patient. Being an outsider enhances both objectivity and evenness of perspective. It makes it possible, with the guarantee of confidentiality, to gather information which might not be available to an administrator. Nonetheless, administrators can develop many of the skills of consultants, and can gather the kinds of information, use the sorts of conceptualizations we have described in this report. This will allow them to make far more informed decisions about their organizations. In particular, it will give them greater clues as to what is going on below

the surface, and how a change on the surface (e.g. formalization) may affect those crucial but less conscious organizational patterns.

It should be emphasized that Organizational Diagnosis, as we advocate it (following Levinson) is not a simple research design in which one gathers data and then analyzes them. Rather the two processes go on simultaneously throughout the course of the diagnosis. Neither is Organizational Diagnosis a short-term curative method. In the first place, there are seldom short-term cures for fundamental problems. In the second place, diagnosis identifies problems, but the solutions are matters for policy decisions. Often several competing approaches are equally plausible, but will have different results for the educational process.

History: The first important set of data for which the analyst looks may be called genetic. These involve the historical and developmental process through which the current organization came into being. Material at two levels is included. First and most important is the general history of the organization, its key developmental phases, major crises, and service history. The second level consists of the particular events leading either to outside consultation or a particular focus of internal research--i.e., the consideration of accountability formalization. In the latter case the analyst must attempt to understand how and why this became an issue. In both cases, the consultant or internal researcher must be careful to both gather the conscious perceptions of the members of the organization and to look for other factors which may have been important but not identified as such. The relationship between what members see and do not see will be of continuing importance to the analyst.

Genetic data is important in general as it provides the context in which current organizational conflicts are played out. People form expectations--both conscious and unconscious--concerning the ways in which the organization will deal with problems and issues. Often these will be based on past figures in the organization or traumas which it experienced but which are no longer directly relevant. It is the nature of life that people must plan on the basis of experience. The important thing is to be as aware as possible of the factors which determine one's expectations, so that one can evaluate them and decide whether they are fully valid. For the anlyst, genetic data also provide clues as to the characteristic responses of the organization to situations of stress or change. These will aid him in predicting responses to the changes which are proposed and the stresses they will entail. Lastly, genetic data can suggest issues hidden deep in the organizational unconscious, which might otherwise go undiscovered until brought to the surface in the course of implementation.

Structure and Process: The second important set of data concerns the current organization as a whole. This can roughly be divided into structural and processual data. Structural information includes many of the variables traditionally considered by formal organization studies in sociology. Thus it is concerned with the formal plan of the organization--its chart, systems concept, and formal task description. It deals with the physical and fiscal resources on which the organization may draw, the financial structure, and ecological pattern in which it uses them. Personnel are evaluated through the consideration of questions such as: How many people are employed? From where

do they come and what are their demogrpahic and personal characteristics? How long have they been in the organization? What are the absentee and turnover rates and how are they distributed in the organization? How are personnel problems dealt with? How is recruiting handled? What is the structure of supervision? training? compensation? and so forth? Structure also includes the policies and procedures of the organization in as far as these are formalized and treated as 'given' or static. Crucial variables include the amount of discretion given to participants, the scope, complexity and formalization of rules, the way and extent in which they are communicated. Lastly, structural data include the time-spans and rhythms which are dictated to the organization by the structure. There are service cycles, planning cycles, scheduling concerns, varying senses of urgency and so forth. Even the way in wich each day is broken into parts or the extent to which the daily routine is repetitive has been of much concern to school districts. The observer is likely to find himself interested in the overall time-sense of the organization. It can be very revealing of emotional tone to note that an organization has a continual sense of urgency or complacency, that punctuality is highly valued or regarded as of secondary importance. Many school districts in fact raise punctuality to the point of a fetish while others are characterized by the attitude that there is all the time in the world (despite the obviously limited amount of time that individual students spend in school).

The most crucial aspect of process data is communication. The consultant or internal researcher must discover how the organization acquires its incoming information, what this information is, how

sufficient it is and/or is felt to be, how continuous its flow is and from where it comes. The processing, integration, storage and/or dissemination of this information are also important. One of the things a good investigator will be looking for is an idea of how systematic this communications pattern is, how much it depends on formal (as opposed to informal) ties and how much it is subject to planning. These factors provide either a prepared or an unreceptive base for accountability implementation. Lastly, of course, the researcher will also be anxious to see how the environment responds to communication sent out by the organization.

Psycho-Social Organization: Having established the structural parameters and historical context of the organization's operation, the next task is to consider that operation itself. This is a complex interrelationship of task-oriented and psycho-social behavior. Task behavior is at least relatively explicitly formulated, although it is also influenced by a variety of unconscious factors. In most educational institutions, on the other hand, psycho-social organization has been allowed to develop without plan over the years, and is not the object of any considerable amount of conscious attention. It is our contention that this must be changed. Because schools depend on the relatively uncontrollable behavior of a large number of professional staff working fairly independently, psycho-social influences are extremely important. Teachers have--and must have--a great deal of discretion in their day-to-day activities. Their 'socialization' thus becomes the major institutional influence on their behavior --not the explicit formal control of their superiors.

The investigator must thus turn his attention to the forces which determine this socialization. Districts have varying amounts and quality of formal introduction and indoctrination programs. The on-the-job training and advice which teachers receive vary. These are important influences, but no matter how thorough they are, they do not rival the impact of the sentient groups into which teachers are organized. These are enduring social units which may undermine or reinforce the formal aims and demands of the school district. The groups are large--e.g. a whole school--and small--e.g. the teachers at one grade level within an elementary school. Generally speaking, the influence of the small groups is greater, but even informal clique formation is influenced by larger structures. The way in which evaluation is carried out, for example, may lead certain teachers to ally with others since their productivity is considered largely in common. In order to understand what goes on in the organization the investigator cannot limit himself to its formal side, or even to a consideration of formal rules and the breaking of formal rules. He must also consider the whole system of informal rules based on the sentient--as opposed to task--structure of the institution.

There are a variety of ways in which he should go about this. He will need to conduct interviews at all levels of the organization. He will need to participate informally in and observe the daily life of the constituent sub-units of the organization as a whole. Aside from the fact that few administrators can afford the time to do very much of this, their presence is likely to disrupt the ordinary activities of teachers more than that of a complete

outsider. This will always limit the information which they can gather about this fundamental aspect of organizational life. In addition, administrators are generally predisposed by training, disposition and experience to overrate the importance of the formal side of organization. One of the primary tasks of a consultant in organizational change is to reeducate administrators to see the substrata of the organization for what they are. They are not avoidable or reprehensible rebellions against authority (at least not necessarily). They are indispensable networks of communication and forces of social solidarity. These small groups--not the overall organization or any book of procedures--are the context of the work-day life of members. They are the single most important determinant of the experience of the organization.

The data which bring out this underlying level of organizational life have been called interpretative because instead of standing on their own, they are dependent on the sensitivity and skill of the observer. Objectivity is always elusive. In this case the notion of objectivity is completely out of place. Fairness, absence of emotional involvement are important, but so too are intuitive compatability, sensitivity, etc. The consultant must be able to interpret his own unconscious reactions to various situations and settings of organizational life in order to be able to understand this emotional, sentient side of the institution. These are dealt with through relatively vague concepts such as vividness, alertness and accuracy of response to stimuli, but for good reason. Organizational perceptions can only be indirectly described because they are not generally conscious even to those who create them, feel them.

Difficult as it is, some evaluation must be made of the extent and kind of discrepancy between organizational perceptions of reality and those of the outside analyst. Neither is necessarily more correct, but the dimensions of difference need to be examined.

Even more, anyone within or without the organization who wishes to anticipate its reaction to the implementation of an accountability system must be able to assess the level of its anxiety. Anxiety is never purely an internal characteristic of individuals. It is always a response to situations, to discrepancies between the individual's capabilities or felt capabilities and the demands which he feels placed upon him. Organizations exist in society largely to absorb anxiety, to minimize and channel the demands placed upon people. Where there is a high level of anxiety in an organization it is not doing this job. This is not always a fault. An organization which puts people too much at ease may stifle all potential creativity. On the other hand, an exceptionally sound organization may suffer from an intolerably high level of anxiety because of a disruptive environment. However intuitive such perceptions may be on the part of an analyst, he must take them into account. It is a mistake to focus only on information which can be dealt with in a very 'hard' fashion if that means excluding important variables. Attitudes, feelings and relationships must be dealt with, even if 'objective'techniques can only partially handle them.

Technical-Behavioral Systems: In this study we have focused on the interface between the sentient and psycho-social sides of organizational life on the one hand and the demands and potentiali-

ties of formal planning and management systems on the other. Our approach to this is based on a variety of organizational research methodologies, none of which has previously taken this area as a focus. The most important related work has included the Tavistock studies of socio-technical systems, but the technical demands considered by Miller and Rice (1967), for example, have come from the production requirements and facilities of the enterprise. Those with which we are most concerned come specifically from formal management techniques. They are chosen; they are not simply incidental to the production field in which the organization works. Further, while all technical systems involve at least a modicum of human participation, accountability systems are crucially and almost entirely behavioral. They are not merely serviced by people; they are about people.

Levinson's very useful work has consisted most importantly of the development of a manual for the diagnosis of organizational problems. It makes the point that organizations must be considered as organic wholes, just as people must, and we have followed this advice. Levinson does not deal specifically with management technologies, however. In order to adapt his diagnostic categories, the work of Miller and Rice and the other theoretical, conceptual and empirical work considered in Chapters II and III, to formalization processes, we have taken elements of our own approach from many sources. We recommend that investigators preparing for accountability implementations in the field do the same. The different approaches emphasize different aspects of organizational life. Each of these aspects is always present, but only a few are primary

foci of organizational attention or anxieties at any one time. Organizational Diagnosis is a means of discovering which. As we have elaborated it, we hope that it will turn attention to the real fundamental problems which underly symptoms. Once this is done, however, a large part of the task still remains.

Most problems admit of various solutions. Educational policy is concerned with choosing among these competing solutions. We are not involving in making policy recommendations. Our recommendations are instrumental. We hope that policy makers will, if they pursue an adequate technical-behavioral analysis, realize the vast implications of almost any technical change for the social system of their organization. To this end they must examine accountability systems, not only for their manifest educational content, but also for their hidden psycho-social implications. These are evident in the level of analysis required, the social units with which the system will deal, or which it will divide, the people, groups, and strata within the organization to which it will give or from which it will take power. Even the most straightforward statistical system for budgetary allocation must make use of certain socially significant categories which may, conceivably, reinforce dysfunctional patterns or disrupt functional ones. At the very least, a failure to analyze the interface may result in the accountability system being simply laid over the top of the organization with almost as little influence on the rest as the jacket of the book has on its contents.

Analyzing the interface involves first of all specialized knowledge of both sides--of technical management and planning

systems and of organizational analysis. The specialized concepts which we have added are few (although there are many specialized applications of general concepts). Most of these have to do with the problem of fit. At the simplest, it is important to match complexity of accountability effort to the capacity of the organization. This capacity is determined largely by the complexity of current operative patterns. It is also a function of level of organizational identity. Since, as we have described, organizations act to absorb a variety of tensions for their members, and they do this through the formation of solidary social groups and larger structures, the ramifying of an organizational structure breaks up this capacity to cope. This is related to the overall organizational problem of managing differentiation and integration. The organization must find the balance between overall integration and/or centralization and diversified decision bases which allows it most effectively to manage its resources and mediate transactions with its environment. Because centralized decision-making is the most administratively 'neat,' there is a tendency to assume that it is the most effective. Leaving aside possible conflicts with the sentient organization, it probably is the most effective--for formal internal issues. But organizations are never totally internalized entities. They are constantly exchanging goods, services and resources--not to mention information and membership--with their environment. It is thus necessary that accountability systems, like the rest of the administrative efforts of which they are a part, be appropriate to the level of interaction the organization maintains with its 'significant others.' The highest level or most sophisticated level of

analysis is not always the best. This is not always or only because it is difficult to implement. It is also because detailed analysis presupposes an ability to effectively break the organization down into very minute operational units, and these may a) not exist, or b) be far more complex that it is possible for either community or staff to deal with. The organizational knowledge generated by an information control system--which is the most fundamental nature of all accountability systems--must be at an appropriate level for the organization in which the system works. There is no overall absolute best.

Technical-behavioral analysis attempts to go beyond the observation that task and sentient organizations are interdependent to a method for the selection of the most functional mode of interdependence. Selection of such an ideal adaptation may mean modifying the independent ideals of both accountability and social organization. It means recognition that choices are and that much of the strategy depends on the assessment of the current state of the organization, not only on the ultimate ends sought. One may well find faults with traditional modes of operation, but one must also recognize their strength. Above all, one must attempt to be explicit in formulating the reasons for particular choices in the organizational use of accountability systems.

Choosing the System: Our focus has not been primarily on the technical aspects of accountability systems, and we shall not presume to pass judgment on them now. Our comments are of more restricted scope. We would, in fact, argue that scope ought to be

more generally restricted. There is too great a tendency in the literature on accountability to give pronouncements 'in general.' Advocates maintain that this, that or the other accountability system is the best, in the absolute. Instead we feel that accountability systems need to be matched to organizations. An extremely elaborate, computer-assisted, abstract system is only appropriate in an organization which works on the basis of highly formal categories and with clear decision-criteria. This is seldom the case in any school district, but some approximate this ideal more closely than others. The formalization of educational endeavor, the consciousness of institutional life is never complete, and is only produced by gradual incremental steps. Accountability formalization can be one of these. If a district has hitherto operated on very low levels of abstraction it is usually best to introduce a relatively unabstract accountability system. A more complex one will represent a step of similar distance for a district previously more formal in its functioning.

Some accountability systems are oriented solely to fiscal issues. Others are limited to any matters which can be quantified but lose the qualitative aspects. Still others are concerned primarily with the organization and not with quantitative factors. Only a few implementations have really dealt with change extensively. As we have observed this is not simply a failing--although we do see a general overemphasis on the technical. The failure comes when a district does not make clear to itself just what it expects from its accountability system. How does it intend to use information

which is gathered? If it gathers performance data on teachers is it going to use these for punitive purposes or for changing training programs? These issues are not to be decided in the absolute but as a part of the preliminary discussions in each school district.

Two dimensions are particularly important in differentiating the structure of systems (as opposed to the purpose). These are relative complexity and relative stability/flexibility. The complexity of a system should in general parallel that of the organization into which it is implemented. It should deal with data at the level of the groups into which the district itself differentiates its functioning. In practice many districts follow the exact opposite of this rule. They implement complex accountability sytems to make up for a lack of sophistication in the rest of their educational organization. Such a strategy is always counterproductive. While a low level accountability system in a highly complex organization would not be likely to produce the same problems, it would be highly ineffective. As it happens, we did not discover many instances of this. The infatuation with the technology seems to push districts the other way.

As to stability/flexibility, the question is more complex. A wide range of aspects of systems can influence districts in one direction or the other. First, we must differentiate between the stability of the accountability system and of the district. Now, while a school district is never completely static--being a living organization of people--an accountability system can be static, can be left to atrophy as the organization changes. In general,

though, there is at least some change on both sides. A dilemma comes for a district which wishes to maximize stability. In order to do this, it will be necessary to introduce several small changes to preclude the need for larger, perhaps catastrophic ones. An accountability system can be organized precisely to accomplish this. It can bring information to bear on the changes in the fit between aspects of the organization. As these relationships change, it is implied that changes are needed to preserve the stability of fit overall. A system must, thus, be quite flexible in order to preserve the relative stability of the organization. It should ideally be able to suggest which way the wind is blowing, so the organization knows which way to bend to avoid breaking.

On the other hand, the environment sometimes changes much more rapidly than a school district. In such circumstances it may be necessary for educators to introduce a series of radical changes in an effort to catch up. In such cases, the implementation procedures and the use of the accountability system will be aimed toward provoking changes, not holding them in check. Paradoxically, this may require a highly stable system. During periods of rapid change it is easy to lose sight of overall goals. The system may be used to keep these goals in the forefront of the change effort. It will start by holding the <u>system</u> (i.e. not the members) accountable for the new set of goals. At first, they will fall far short. Gradually, as the district shifts its organization it will come closer to the new performance goals. There cannot be an effective compromise between these two uses of accountability systems, although one may over time supercede the other without changing the formal designation

of the system. It must be clear to all concerned which strategy of system use is being employed. Most of all, district policy-makers must commit themselves either to the struggle for managed, slow change or to the rapid change strategy. Nothing fails as quickly and surely as claiming the latter and instituting the former. That creates the maximum of tension and the minimum of results.

Implementation Strategy: Following our suggestion that there are two basic ways to use accountability systems, we propose two basic implementation strategies. These are not hard and fast plans, but themes to be adapted to the particular situations of varying school districts. A long-range implementation effort, in fact, might bring both of these themes or meta-plans to bear. It might begin by focusing on change, in order to build a new task-orientation. Then, having 'destructed in order to restructure' it might change to a focus on integration in an effort to build stability in the new organization. Although some of the specific techniques in the two approaches overlap, their significance is quite different. It should be noted before we go on to discuss these plans that we are assuming as a baseline that the accountability system to be implemented is concerned with the organization as a whole, that it is not simply a fiscal accountability system or one operating only on a paper level and not requiring the involvement of the members of the organization in any extensive way.

META-PLAN A: Focus on Integration: There are two levels at which we may focus on integration. These are small groups and whole organizations. Both are important, and they exist in interdependence.

The small group level, as we have commented, is the sentient base of the organization, the foundation level of its operation. The emotional attachments and social bonds of members are primarily within small locally defined groups. The first question an implementation designer must ask is which of these group structures are compatible with the proposed accountability system. He must recognize that breaking down any of these groups will destablize the organization. In addition, any accountability effort which tries this is likely to be resisted. To the extent that he can, the implementor will want to foster attachments at this level since these increase members' investments in structure, and thus increase the stability of the organization. He will also want to try to shape the accountability program to the scale of these groups, and to secure the support of the groups as such for the implementation. The attitudes which members learn in small groups are the strongest.

The primary tool for the achievement of these ends is Tavistock-type small group work on the local level. Its particular characteristics will be that it is continuous over long periods of time, meetings take place at regular intervals but are also reinforced by daily life, and the boundaries of the implementation groups will coincide with those of sentient groups in the organization. To an extent this contradicts usual Tavistock procedure. Ordinarily in both group and individual psychoanalytic treatment, people are taken out of their everyday circumstances in order to free them from established patterns of functioning. But it is precisely because these are modes of securing change that this is so. The assumption of an

integration-focused accountability implementation is that the organization is basically healthy, and so should be maintained and strengthened, not altered substantially.

One advantage of this treatment of sentient groups is that it is possible to give the groups concrete tasks to solve. As we have described educational and treatment groups in general (Chapters II and III) the tasks are self-analytic in the main. The task of the therapy group is to display and deal with neurosis as a problem of the group. This is a part of the task of a group in the implementation, but the main task is to build its own participation in the organization as a whole. The primary focus of this endeavor is, of course, the accountability system which is being implemented. The group can go over the proposed accountability system as a group, consider its implications for group life, and work out an accommodation to them. Through dealing with the plans, it will both develop a greater sense of its own role and a greater sense of ownership of organizational changes. The changes too will not appear as such threats as they seem usually to do, for the security of the sentient group acts to protect the individual.

The consideration of concrete tasks is, for most relatively low level groups, largely one of breaking down and specifying the general tasks defined by the higher levels. This accords with Simon's (1957) suggestions of how the chain of administration should work in an effective organization (see Chapter III). Each level in the hierarchy takes its mandate from that above it, handles those tasks which it can, and breaks down and re-delegates those with which its subordinates

can better deal. This brings up the second important aspect of the focus on integration: middle management. In our research building-level managers posed one of the greatest blocks to accountability implementation in some districts and were quite indifferent in others. In none of the districts we studied intensively did they find accountability very useful or prove very useful to the implementation process. We suggest that a major reason for this is that accountability is usually a central office project. It acts to increase central office control over information and power (if not control) overall. It does this at the expense of building administrators who see their traditional autonomy waning. It does not do so at the expense of teachers, for in the areas over which they originally had autonomy, they maintain it. The implementation of an accountability system --especially in the integrative mode--is not likely to fundamentally change the nature of the classroom situation and teacher student interaction. It is likely to change the method of reporting of this level of behavior, and to dramatically change the relationship between teachers and middle level administrators.

This is not necessarily desirable--at least from the point of view of the educational process as a whole, however much it may appeal to some central office staff, or school boards. Each district needs to think out very carefully whether it wants to disrupt the crucial middle management operation. Where there are serious flaws in its functioning, to be sure, it must be changed. But a change in it is usually drastic enough to put such an implementation into our second category. When we observed changes they more often appeared

to us as unplanned. They were accidental byproducts of implementations of highly centralized accountability systems.

If an implementation is aimed at increasing integration, it must give substantial attention to the integration of parts and levels. That is, it must integrate autonomous and semi-autonomous sub-units with one another horizontally, and it must vertically integrate levels of authority. Where accountability implementation is used to undermine the authority of middle-management, both kinds of integration suffer. It is important to maximize possible links. Principals and building administrators need to be linked to teachers. That is, they must have effective power to deal with the problems of their subordinates, and accurate information to answer their questions. At the same time, they need to be effective instruments of delegated authority. We recommend that accountability implementations proceed through the building-level administrators, not around them, unless there is a specific reason to the contrary.

Building-level autonomy is important. But like most things it can be overstressed. There need to be mechanisms linking various local educational settings to each other, and in general building horizontal integration. If an accountability system is dealing with relative assessments of programs for budgetary purposes, this is especially important as jealousies are likely. Here too, though centralization is an inadequate answer and may in fact harm integration. What is needed are intermediate associations which can build a sense of common participation--as equals--in the educational enterprise. Group work during the course of the implementation can be

important to this in two respects: first, it can be educational about what other members of the organization do, how they perceive the whole, and how each perceives the other. The relative magnitude of differentiations can be realistically assessed rather than left subject to imaginative exaggeration or underestimation. Secondly, it can help to build ties of friendship across units. These acts as communication links thus helping to spread creative ideas through the organization and relating common experiences. Such a network can help to minimize the jealousies which arise when one group experiences a setback and ssumes that the others are not. Realistic interactions with other groups can also help to build group spirit and a realistic sense of pride in one's own achievements. For this sort of integration to be most effective such groups should be instituted as enduring aspects of the organization as a whole, not just as adjuncts to implementation. Renewed and invigorated academic departments can work well in this respect, at least for high school teachers. The basic point is that intermediate associations of all kinds can contribute an immense amount to integration. They can contribute more if members feel a sense of commitment to them. This they will only do, of course, if they expect the groups to be continuing entities. If the groups are perceived as only part of the implementation process, members will enter them with all their defenses up. But to have the groups just adjuncts would be contradiction to the basic theme anyway. They are part and parcel of the common goal--integration--along with accountability.

Building somewhat larger scale sentient groups--intermediate associations--can also help to bring order to the smaller ones. This

is because left on their own the small groups are apt to see their competitiveness more than their essentially common enterprise. In all the school districts we studied intensively, members had a remarkably similar notion of the nature of their overall goals and efforts. This implies that if they were brought together in a reasonably stable order, they could see the commonality for themselves. Instead of competititon based on the general insecurity, many sentient groups could be linked together. Thus, it might be useful to organize the intermediate associations not as agglomerations of so many individuals, but sometimes as aggregates of smaller level groups. All kinds of social organizations depend on the existence of both cross-cutting and hierarchically incorporative bonds. Centralization is generally the enemy, not the hero of integration.

As a parting word under this meta-plan consideration, we may affirm again the importance of stability. Change has become an overglorified object in today's educational circles. Certainly, positive change is good, but there are points of diminishing returns. The objects of change must be evaluated not simply as more or less desirable end states--for nothing lasts forever--but as more or less desirable stages on a continous road of educational improvement.

META-PLAN B: Focus on Change: Sometimes, for a variety of reasons, organizations do outlive their fundamental healthiness. They must, in these cases, then be taken apart in order to be rebuilt anew. Just as revolution is occasionally the only answer in politics, as minor reform fails to ever catch up with changing circumstances, so in the life-histories of organizations. Small towns are sometimes

turned into large suburbs, for example, almost overnight. An educational system which could keep pace with such change would have either remarkable foresight or an extremely unstable structure. More often, the schools are left behind. As we discussed in the introduction to our first case study (Chapter V), people often invest some of their most conservative sentiments in the schools. Their childhood memories, their desires for their own children, for their towns and country, their veneration for tradition all seem likely to be focused especially on education. Paradoxically this is because education is concerned with one of the areas over which their conscious control is weakest--their children. Social change disrupts the relations of parents to children. The needs of society and accordingly the tasks of the schools are changed--and along with them, the relationship between parents and schools frequently becomes confused or hostile.

Relationships inside the school are likely to become just as fragmented and conflicted. Teachers and administrators are likely to split into camps--some clinging to traditional models of themselves and their roles, others looking forward, learning about the latest educational techniques. Neither group is necessarily right. The tradition lists are sometimes only stubborn, but sometimes the new techniques are only gimmicky fads. The point is that the collaborative nature of the educational enterprise is destroyed. Once this sort of polarization has taken place--for whatever reason--there is no pasting the institution back together. Nonetheless, many administrators and school boards have attempted to use account-

ability systems as paste. They have been confronted with two problems, or rather, two levels of the same problem. Either they simply find that the glue doesn't hold, and the implementation makes little difference or they find that the disruption of the implementation throws the district right over the brink into relative chaos.

When a school district has gotten itself into this sort of situation, the only solution is to recognize that and implement radical change. This is, of course, threatening to administrators. They tend to fear both--a real loss of control and a decline in their public support--as the public blames them for a supposed loss of control. But if in fact their situation is extremely deteriorated, they have no other choice. They would be only dragging out matters not to act radically. In order to do so, they must begin with processes of destructuring and of building anew simultaneously.

Group work of the ordinary Tavistock kind can be an extremely valuable tool for them. Psychoanalysis and its group derivatives are precisely techniques for working back through unsatisfactory adaptations and habits to reorient the system. Often this involves fewer concrete changes than might be supposed. A fundamental shift in system can often be achieved through a couple of crucial changes in structure. Sometimes, of course, the changes must be more thorough is to be radical, it must be assumed that all of its ramifications cannot be planned out in advance. Therefore, it will be necessary for many of them to be worked out by the members of various thematic groups during the process of change itself. These groups could be organized in a variety of ways. In a district which has been

primarily localized, subject-matter orientations may be helpful. Or, the different goals may be assigned thematically to working groups. Groups should in any case be primarily cross-cutting--composed of members of all the differing sub-units of the school district.

This is not to say that whenever possible, a district should not make use of preexisting sentient groups. It must, for it must continue its daily operation even during the process of radical change. Unlike an industrial plant, it cannot suspend production while it changes techniques or organization. Many of the shifts which it needs to make in sentient structure are at the middle level of links between small groups, not the small groups themselves. Above all, a district working with a focus on change must have strong mechanisms for keeping the long-range objectives in view. It must hold the organization itself to account, not the individual members. If it does the latter, it will sow confusion and mistrust, and fail to provide the incentives for creative change.

The introduction of any radical change depends on the substitution of one structure for another. The focus of implementors must be much more heavily on the sentient aspects of organization even than where integration is the goal. The reason is that they must create a new set of groups--a more difficult task than reshaping old ones. Implementors and administrators will find radical changes easier to work with than they might expect, however. This is because in a period of radical destructure, people seek sentient attachments wherever they can find them, and thus are likely to become actively involved in the new groups. Where they resist is much more where old groups are intact, and there is no great pressure to work with

new ones. Radical change is still not an easy road. It should not be the 'treatment of choice' for a school district unless it is truly necessary. However well-planned it may be, its planning can never be complete, for far too many variables are brought into the picture.

Technical-Behavioral Analysis: Summary of the Technique

It is useful, at this point, to summarize the four steps of a technical-behavioral analysis aimed at facilitating accountability system implementation.

1. The Decision to Implement: The decision to implement an accountability system of any type and at any level of sophistication should involve a consideration of the impact of such a system on the organization as a whole. The particular issues of that assessment are raised earlier in this chapter.
2. The Evaluation of the Organization: A diagnosis of the organization is the key to a) the decision to implement a system, b) the choice of the system, and c) the choice of an implementation strategy. The evaluation of the organization must take into account both the technical capacity of the organization (its familiarity with planning and operational systems, its analytical capability, etc.), and its psycho-dynamic status. An outline of the structural and psycho-dynamic variables to be considered in this assessment as well as some principles of interpretation appears earlier in this chapter and in this

Report. The diagnosis of the organization in both technical and behavioral (psycho-social) terms is an absolute requirement in terms of maximizing the potential for making intelligent and useful decisions about system choice and implementation strategy.

3. Choice of the System: Each type of planning or management system involves the creation of new tasks for the organization. These tasks often threaten the competence of individuals in the organization who may or may not be able to satisfy the demands of the new task requirements. In addition, the new tasks may involve the collection of information that is evaluative in nature--that may imply the eventual loss of authority, autonomy, role and work pattern re-definition. Thus the choice of the system must be calculated in terms of the 1) design of the system (its structure and processes) and 2) the level of analysis that is required. It is clear that different planning sytems mandate different planning structures and levels of analysis. It is also clear that any given type of accountability or planning system can be implemented in part (utilizing only portions of the structure) and at different levels of analytical sophistication. The type of system to be implemented (the choice, for example, to implement program budgeting or MBO, etc.) and the level to be articulated in terms of design features and analytical power are decisions which can only be made intelligently after a diagnosis of the organization in terms of the organization's technical capacities and organizational strength.

4. Implementation Strategy: Just as there is a range of different types of accountability systems and levels of articulation, so there are also a number of different types of implementation strategies. These strategies in terms of their generic characteristics have been treated earlier; once again, the choice of an implementation strategy can only be made after the diagnosis of the organization--particulary, in terms of its capacity to internalize an innovation of the type being considered. The diagnosis which facilitates the selection of an implementation strategy is one which will consider both the technical capability and behavioral (psycho-social) aspects of the organization.

Summary: Thus the a) decision to implement an accountability system , b) the choice of the system, and c) the choice of an implementation strategy must rest on a diagnosis of the organization as a whole. This diagnosis must take into account the technical and psycho-social status of the organization. An assessment must be made about which system and implementation strategy will most maximize the chance of developing the organization's planning capabilities through the introduction of the formal planning mechanism.

Conclusion: We have stressed three main points concerning the implementation of accountability systems. First is the importance of the sentient substrata of small groups in the organization, which are the focus of the psycho-social life of individuals and the base-

line of collective functioning. Second, we have stressed the need for strong and viable intermediate associations. In a stable organization these must be of both the cross-cutting and hierarchically incorporative variety. Such intermediate associations hold the organization as whole together, for they provide the primary link between upper and lower levels. They cannot be replaced by an abstract communication system however clear. Power and authority, to be effective, must be able to focus with adequate concreteness at the particular level where a problem occurs. When a central office or school board makes all decisions, it becomes too difficult to distinguish crucial policy from administrative detail--for both sides.

We have also stressed that the strength of an implementation effort must vary with the depth of change which an accountability system (or larger program) brings. The efficiency and quality of an accountability program are not major factors influencing the ease with which it may be implemented. Disturbances in the stable functioning of the school district are inevitable. They must be managed as best as possible, and preferably turned to the advantage of the implementation effort through a focus on restructuring. By the same token, however, accountability systems should not be implemented without realizing that their impacts will be disruptive in the short term. They cannot be effective stop-gap measures. If they are not used to really move forward, they will not help at all.

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